THE CONGRUENCE BETWEEN COLLEGE STUDENTS' TWITTER IDENTITIES AND
SELF-CONCEPTS

by

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ABSTRACT

The theories of imagined audiences, attention to social comparison information, and self-concept have been researched and verified with respect to individuals and their behaviors. However, no research has been conducted regarding the relationship between these concepts and Twitter identities and behaviors. This study assesses possible relationships between these concepts and the Twitter identities and actions of the typical college student. Results indicate these relationships exist and that college students' behaviors and identities on Twitter are impacted by these concepts. Additionally, gender and college class differences were found to be significant between certain concepts and the Twitter identities of college students. Limitations of the study are considered and suggestions for future research are given.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Twitter is a social media website that allows users to engage in self-expression and connect with any number of people. While Twitter has many uses, a very common function it serves is to allow users to "construct a meta-narrative and meta-image of self" through the online profile (Marwick and Boyd, 2010; p. 119). With the introduction of social media and Twitter came the concept of imagined audiences. Imagined audiences are constructed by users and kept in mind to allow for a more appropriate and appealing presentation on social media. As a population, college students in particular are characterized by having a comfort with technology as well as a very heavy involvement in social media. Due to this fact, Twitter is often utilized by college students to express themselves and create digital identities to communicate to different audiences.

Prior to the introduction of social media and Twitter, social scientists researched and established that there are different versions of self-concept that help to explain a person's formation and idea of themselves. The three versions of self are actual self-concept, ideal self-concept, and social self-concept (Avery, Kozinets, Mittal, Raghubir and Woodside, 2013). Additionally, a measure of a person's Attention to Social Comparison Information was established to determine the extent to which one is aware of his or her behavior in terms of the reactions of others to that behavior (Festinger, 1954).

While Attention to Social Comparison Information, self-concept, and imagined audiences are established and thoroughly researched concepts, no information exists on how these concepts relate to Twitter behavior; more specifically, Twitter identity. Additionally, there is very little information available about the identity management and personal branding practices of college students on Twitter. This study will investigate the relationships

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between the different self-concepts, Twitter identities, Attention to Social Comparison

Information, and imagined audiences online of the typical college student using Twitter.

Furthermore, it will look at potential differences in these relationships between college class

levels and gender.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Characteristics of Typical College Students

The term "college student" is very broad and can encompass many different types of people if taken in the literal sense. For the purpose of this study, what is examined is considered to be the typical or traditional college student: people between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five who are currently enrolled full-time in college and possess similar behavioral characteristics, such as money and time constraints and appear to have an advanced understanding of technology. An industry report done in 2012 by Packaged Facts, a provider of consumer market research, states that when it comes to technology consumption, college students generally have "deep comfort with technology, heavy involvement in social media, a multitasking mentality, [and] non-stop immersion with screens on cell phones, digital tablets and PCs" (Brown and Washton, 2012; p. 1). College students also tend to be "less concerned about the use of personal information collected" (Brown and Washton, 2012; p. 3).

These findings indicate that as a group, typical college students are more willing to share personal aspects of themselves and their lives in the public arena, specifically through the use of technology. The same study by Packaged Facts also found that the primary overall characteristics of college students today include: optimism for the financial future and increased awareness of social standing (Brown and Washton, 2012). This market report perfectly summarizes the subjects this study will be focusing on.

Functions of Social Media

In recent years, social media has become an increasingly prevalent part of society in general. This is in part due to the birth of Web 2.0, which was the shift of the Internet to "a

social, interactive medium from its original roots as a form of one-way transmission" (Sheth and Solomon, 2014; p. 125). Social media can serve many purposes as it has a variety of functions. It allows people to engage more personally with other people as well as brands and organizations at any time they choose (Edelman, 2010). Social media platforms are also often utilized by individuals to get and maintain attention through self-expression (Marwick and Boyd, 2010). Another function social media serves is identity management. Digital identity management is defined as controlling the process of person perception online in such a way that it enhances social capital (Sheth and Solomon, 2014). In other words, social media can serve as a platform through which users brand themselves.

Imagined Audiences. In order to utilize the functions of social media, users often engage in the practice of imagining audiences for their posts. An imagined audience is "imagined and constructed by an individual in order to present themselves appropriately, based on technological affordances and immediate social context" (Marwick and Boyd, 2010; p. 115). For example, college students might imagine to be followed or viewed by future employers or peers on social media and use those imagined audiences to determine the content of their posts. They post with a particular audience in mind, and could possibly alter what they post based on those audiences.

College Students Uses of Social Media. The previously mentioned market report by Packaged Facts found that 71% of college men and 86% of college women use different social medias (Brown and Washton, 2012). This statistic indicates that social media is a dominant part of most college students lives. The primary purpose social media serves for the typical college student is personal branding. Often posts are written to target different people, and while target audiences vary by user and purpose, the common end goal is to be

marketable to the imagined audience (Marwick and Boyd, 2010). College students strategically manage their digital identities, and "some techniques of audience management resemble the practices of 'micro-celebrity'" (Marwick and Boyd, 2010; p. 114). The term micro-celebrity indicates that when college students practice digital identity management, they perceive that more people are following them and tracking what they have to say. The imagined audiences make tailoring the digital identity more manageable.

Twitter. There are many different social media sites, but this study will focus on Twitter because it is "the largest, most well-known, as well as the most popular of the micro-blogging sites" (Jansen, Zhang, Sobel and Chowdry, 2009; p. 3861). In a paper presented at the 27th International Computer-Human Interaction conference, Twitter is described in the following way:

> "Launched on July 13, 2006, Twitter is a micro-blogging service that allows users to send updates (a.k.a. tweets) to a network of friends (a.k.a. followers) from variety of devices. Tweets are text-based posts of up to 140 characters in length. The default setting for tweets is public, which permits people to follow and read each other's tweets without giving mutual permission" (Jansen, et al., 2009; p. 3861).

Like many social media sites, Twitter can be used for means of digital identity management. Personal branding occurs with the goal of increasing personal social capital, and Twitter creates a "quick and effective way to access large amounts of people" (Osborn, Miller, McCain and Belle, 2016; p. 137). People often use Twitter to construct a "meta-narrative and meta-image of self" and place value on whatever gets the most attention from the public (Marwick and Boyd, 2010; p. 119).

Self-Concept Theory and Identity

Self-Concept Theory and familiarity with the process of identity formation is important to understanding the way people portray themselves. The definition of self-concept is "a person's conception of himself or herself" (Avery, Kozinets, Mittal, Raghubir and Woodside, 2013; p. 121). A person's self-concept involves more than just how he or she internally sees himself or herself. Self-concept as a whole is made up of three versions of self: actual, ideal, and social. One's objective idea of who he or she is determines the actual self. Who he or she would like to become is the ideal self, and ones perception of the way others see him or her is the social self-concept (Avery, et al., 2013). The act of personal branding on social media indicates people working towards their ideal selves through management of their social selves.

Identity is defined as "any category label with which a [person] self-associates that is amenable to a clear picture of what a person in that category looks like, thinks, feels and does" (Reed, Forehand, Puntoni and Warlop, 2012; p. 310). Identity is a huge part of self-concept in that when a person considers himself or herself to have a certain identity, it impacts conception of self. This process is known as identity verification (Reed, et al., 2012). Identity verification is defined as when "individuals monitor their own behaviors to manage and reinforce their identities" (Reed, et al., 2012; p. 310). When identity is verified, it becomes an active component of self. This is known as identity salience. Identity conflict can occur when there are multiple identities to manage (Reed, et al., 2012). Each of these processes contributes to the formation and expression of a person's identity.

Identity verification, identity salience, and identity conflict all occur in the context of Twitter. When users of Twitter monitor the content of their profiles and tweets to reinforce

their digital identities, they are engaging in identity verification. Identity salience occurs

when the user starts to incorporate the digital portrayal of self on Twitter into their real

personality, or vice versa. Identity conflict can occur when the user is attempting to meet the

expectations of different imagined audiences, for example parents or peers.

       Attention to Social Comparison Information. Otherwise known as ATSCI, a person's

level of attention to social comparison refers to the extent to which a person is aware and is

concerned with the reactions of others to their behavior (Festinger, 1954). American social

psychologist Leon Festinger established a thirteen-item scale that measures the level of one's

ATSCI. Those with high levels of attention to social comparison are more likely to be aware

of and concerned about the attitudes of others towards their behavior. Therefore, high ATSCI

levels make someone more susceptible to identity and behavior management.

The Theory of the Extended Self

      The Theory of the Extended Self is largely based upon the Self-Concept Theory. The

premise of The Theory of the Extended Self is that people view possessions as part of

themselves, and that those possessions represent the extended self (Belk, 1988). Due to this

process, "people seek, express, confirm, and ascertain a sense of being through what they

have" (Belk, 1988, 146). This is compatible with self-concept theory because people use

possessions to develop their actual, ideal, and social selves. When identity is being formed

possessions play a role since "possessions incorporated in extended self serve valuable

functions to healthy personalities" (Belk, 1988, 159). The categories of possessions

commonly incorporated into the sense of self that Belk includes in this research are

collections, money, pets, other people, and body parts. However, extended self includes more

than just objects. The theory also considers the way we view our family, friends, city, and

nation to be part of who we are (Belk, 1988). Anything that is rare or hard to find, customized, has effort expended on it, and is socially visible is more likely to become part of one's extended self.

Overall, extended self is considered not only individualistically but also hierarchically, because we exist as collectives in groups and communities (Belk, 1988). This ties in with identity management both off and online because one might place more value on certain possessions that develop his or her extended self in a way that appeals to his or her target audience. For example, Belk discusses in his paper an interview with a man who viewed his actual self as undesirable, but placed value on his Porsche as part of his extended self because he found that women showed more interest in him, making him seem more appealing and more closely aligned with his ideal self (Belk, 1988).

The Digital Extended Self. The Theory of the Extended Self continues to be applicable in the age of Web 2.0 and social media. The boundaries between producer and consumer, offline and online, and body and technology are dissolving through the use of digital media, and there are new ways individuals can use it to alter their extended selves. A study found that "[people] place more value on digital items that reflect their physical identities" (Sheth and Solomon, 2014; p. 126). Belk revisited the Theory of the Extended Self in 2013 and found that, "In the digital world, the self is now extended into avatars, broadly construed, with which we identify strongly and which can affect our offline behavior and sense of self" (Belk, 2013; p. 490). With respect to personal branding and digital identity management, Belk also found that a person's identity or self is constructed more publicly with the ability to receive instant feedback that allows them to modify accordingly.

Personal Branding

Personal branding can occur both on and offline. People use personal branding as a tool to market themselves in a way that is appealing to their target audiences. Personal branding online is also known as personal online reputation management or digital identity management, and it "requires that an individual be strategic about the images and information they are posting on social media sites, and to be diligent in managing their profiles in a way that accentuates their best skillsets and experiences" (Osborn, et al., 2016; p. 143). When constructing a digital identity, "participants maintain a public-facing persona to manage impressions with potential readers" (Marwick and Boyd, 2010; p. 125). These 'potential readers' are also known as imagined audiences that an individual perceives to tailor their online personality toward.

As previously discussed, the way people brand themselves online changes based on their imagined audiences. They will adjust their content to be more appealing to those that they view as their 'target audience,' or those who are perceived as reading or following posts. (Marwick and Boyd, 2010). Who the imagined audiences are perceived to be change based on the individual and the goals he or she has for his or her online reputation. For example, "some users may use [social media sites] to increase their social connections while others may use them to network with employers and other professionals" (Osborn, et al., 2016; p. 136). The imagined audiences with the most influence on a college student's digital identity have been found to be parents, potential employers, and significant others (Marwick and Boyd, 2010).

Personal Branding with Twitter. Given that the ideal self is who a person would like to become, it has been found that people use online reputation management to work towards

that ideal self and increase personal and professional capital (Osborn, et al., 2016). An article

published in New Media and Society found patterns of behavior on Twitter that often

contribute to the success of identity management online. In general, users engaging in these

practices "use Twitter as a platform to obtain and maintain attention, by targeting tweets

towards their perceived audience's interest and balancing different topic areas" (Marwick

and Boyd, 2010; p. 122). Once the tweets are targeted according to the imagined audience, it

is important that "personal authenticity and audience expectations must be balanced"

(Marwick and Boyd, 2010; p. 126). With online personal branding it has been found that

Twitter users often engage in self-censorship according to the particular imagined audience.

Self-censorship occurs more often "in the face of an imagined audience that includes parents,

employers, and significant others", who are found to be the most influential members of an

audience (Marwick and Boyd, 2010; p. 125). These behaviors are commonly occurring

among Twitter users who participate in personal branding, especially college students.

CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT

This study is focused on how college students engage in personal branding through the use of Twitter, a social media website. Belk's concept of the digital extended self (as discussed in the Literature Review) can be applied to users of Twitter, specifically the college student population on Twitter. Twitter has been described to be used by the public to construct a "meta-narrative and meta-image of self" and value is placed on whatever gets the most attention from other users (Marwick and Boyd, 2010; p. 119). Each individual user's Twitter account is essentially a modified and publically accepted version of themselves. This study seeks to answer four questions with respect to imagined audiences, digital self-concept and personal branding, and attention to social comparison on Twitter.

Specifically, this study examines the concept of imagined audiences and their presence in the world of Twitter. Marwick and Boyd found in their research that specifically users of Twitter take imagined audiences into account. When Twitter users modify their digital selves, they use imagined audiences to construct their online brand in a way that appeals to anyone they feel could be seeing their online activity. This leads up to research questions one and two:

RQ 1: Who are the imagined audiences most significant to college students?

RQ 2: To what extent do college students alter what they post on Twitter for the sake of their imagined audiences?

The Literature Review also discussed self-concept theory. More specifically, three versions of self were discussed: actual, ideal, and social. One's objective idea of who he or she is determines the actual self. Who he or she would like to become is the ideal self, and ones perception of the way others see him or her is the social self-concept (Avery, et al., 2013). This study investigates how self-concepts relate to the Twitter identities of college

students and whether the different versions of self impact their Twitter behavior. In particular, the following research question is investigated:

RQ 3: Are college students' self-concepts congruent with their Twitter identities?

People also vary in the degree to which they care about others perceptions of them. The Attention to Social Comparison Information scale (ATSCI) is a widely used measurement scale that seeks to determine "the extent to which one is aware of others reactions to their behavior and is concerned with the nature of those reactions" (Festinger, 1954). This study will use this scale to determine the extent to which Twitter users engage in attention to social comparison when constructing a digital version of self. Specifically, the following research question is posed:

RQ 4: Is a person's level of attention to social comparison related to his or her behavior on social media?

The Literature Review discussed the characteristics of the typical college student. This study will seek to determine if college students differ in their Twitter behavior and their attitudes towards Twitter identities. More specifically, the following research question is investigated:

RQ 5: Are there gender differences in college students' Twitter behavior?

In-depth interviews indicated gender differences might exist in the Twitter behavior of college students. This research question investigates these potential differences.

METHOD

The research questions regarding college students and their uses of Twitter for personal branding were answered through the development and administration of a survey. Prior to the development of the survey, background knowledge was gained on the subject from existing research. The literature review includes the findings of this secondary data analysis. Knowledge on this particular subject is limited; therefore the research reviewed includes all related topics to the study and its research questions.

After gaining insight from existing research, in-person in-depth interviews were conducted to provide more specific insight on college students and their uses of and feelings about Twitter. There were a total of four interviews conducted, the purpose of which was to gain deeper insight into the objective of this study and provide a direction for survey development. The subjects of the in-depth interviews were all college students, broken down as follows: two females in their senior year, one male in his junior year, and one male in his freshman year. All were current users of Twitter. The in-depth interview questions are included in Appendix 1.

After gaining knowledge more specific to the objective of this study from the in-depth interviews, a survey was developed. The in-depth interviews provided direction and background for the survey to be developed. The survey was the primary data-gathering instrument used in this study. The survey was first pretested to a group of twenty-one respondents who provided feedback for any necessary changes. The final survey was then developed and administered.

The population the survey included was male and female college students, ranging from freshman to graduate students. A nonprobability sample was drawn primarily through

the chain referral/snowball method. The survey was distributed online through Qualtrics, an online data-gathering instrument. More specifically, a link to the survey was shared on Twitter, five Facebook groups, emailed to different marketing and supply chain classes in the Walker College of Business at Appalachian State University, and shared with friends of the researcher. Most of the respondents came from a list of 1,000 students sent from the Institutional Research, Assessment, and Planning department at Appalachian State. Of those who responded to the survey, 259 were current users of Twitter that qualified for this study (which is 57.56% of the 450 who responded). Sample characteristics (n=259) can be seen in Table 1. For the purpose of this study, college classes were grouped into under and upperclassmen. Underclassmen includes freshman and sophomores in college, while upperclassmen includes juniors, seniors, and graduate students. There were about twice as many female respondents as males.

Table 1. Sample Characteristics

	n	%
College Classification		
Underclassmen	111	43.7
Upperclassmen	143	56.3
Gender		
Male	83	32.7
Female	170	66.9

After the survey was administered, the resulting data was analyzed using SPSS. To begin the data analysis, general frequencies and descriptive statistics on all variables were run. A reliability analysis was conducted on the Attention to Social Comparison Information scale (a pre-validated scale) with two items recoded. Independent samples t-tests were run using relevant dependent and independent variables in order to test the research questions.

Correlation analysis was run with ATSCI as an independent variable to test correlation between it and other dependent variables. To measure the congruence between self-concepts, a five-point bipolar scale with different opposing characteristics was given to respondents. They were asked three separate times to place on the scale where they believed their actual self-concept, ideal self-concept, and Twitter identity fell on the scale. The characteristics on the scale were as follows: unique/common, rebellious/fitting in, conservative/fashion forward, trendy/familiar, sexy/modest, and homebody/social. The data analyses will be discussed in greater detail in the results section.

RESULTS

General Twitter Usage

The first section of the survey looked into the general Twitter usage of college students. The survey can be found in Appendix 2. Note that all measures on the survey are based on 5-point a Likert scale with the exception of self-concept. In order to qualify for the study, respondents were required to be current users of Twitter. Of the 468 total respondents, 269 were current users, making the final sample size n=269. Refer to Table 1 for sample characteristics.

In terms of time spent on Twitter, descriptive frequencies show that 122 respondents (47.29%) use Twitter once or twice a week, 46 (17.83%) use once a day, 41 (15.89%) use two or three times a day, 49 (18.99%) use Twitter more than three times a day. That is more than half the sample of college students use Twitter at least once a day. Results from the survey also show that 203 respondents (78.68%) post their own tweets, while 55 respondents (21.32%) do not. It can be assumed that since the ones who do not post their own tweets were still current users of Twitter, they either retweet, favorite, or just look at tweets of those they follow without posting.

Results for Research Question 1

The first research question of this study addresses which imagined audiences are most significant to college students. Results indicate that students do place dissimilar amounts of importance on different imagined audiences when tweeting. Specifically, college students view future employers to be the most important imagined audience thought about when constructing tweets, followed by close friends, current employers, general followers, parents,

and lastly, other family members. Based on the means responses (see Table 2), college

students generally do not think about parents and other family members when tweeting. This

order of importance is true for all college students regardless of gender or class level. To test

this, independent sample t-tests were run. The mean college class responses are listed in

Table 3 and the mean gender responses are listed in Table 4. No significant differences were

found.

**Table 2. Mean Importance
Ratings for Imagined Audiences**

Imagined Audiences	Means
Future Employers	3.80
Close Friends	3.60
Current Employer	3.52
General Followers	3.09
Parents	2.89
Other Family Members	2.80

**Table 3. Mean College Class Differences
for Imagined Audiences**

Imagined Audiences	Means		t-value
	Underclassmen	Upperclassmen	
General Followers	3.13	3.05	0.50
Close Friends	3.58	3.61	-0.18
Parents	2.96	2.85	0.56
Other Family Members	2.87	2.75	0.66
Current Employer	3.45	3.56	-0.66
Future Employers	3.7	3.86	-0.94

* $p<0.1$

** $p<0.05$

*** $p<0.01$

Table 4. Mean Gender Differences
for Imagined Audiences

Imagined Audiences	Means		
	Males	Females	t-value
General Followers	3.19	3.04	0.91
Close Friends	3.62	3.59	0.23
Parents	2.84	2.92	-0.40
Other Family Members	2.88	2.77	0.61
Current Employer	3.39	3.57	-0.98
Future Employers	3.69	3.84	-0.87

* $p<0.1$

** $p<0.05$

*** $p<0.01$

Results for Research Question 2

The second research question examines to what extent, if any, college students alter what they post on Twitter for the sake of their imagined audiences. Overall sample means according to different Twitter behavior variables can be seen in Table 5. The Twitter behavior items in the survey are: "When tweeting do you think before you tweet", "When tweeting is your intent to get a positive reaction", "Do you censor yourself on Twitter", "Do you have a particular audience in mind when tweeting", "Do you refrain from posting anything that could be seen negatively", and "Are you worried about the potential reaction to your tweets". These variables focus on whether college students engage in any kind of alteration or change in their tweets and Twitter behavior due to their imagined audiences. The overall means for these behaviors show that respondents agreed or strongly agreed with every statement except being worried about the potential reaction to their tweets.

**Table 5. Overall Means
for Twitter Behaviors**

When Tweeting…	Means
You think before you tweet	4.16
Your intent is to get a positive reaction	3.70
You censor yourself on Twitter	3.45
You have a particular audience in mind	3.31
You refrain from posting anything that could be seen negatively	3.30
You are worried about potential reaction	2.77

Gender and College Class Differences with Twitter Behavior. Independent samples t-tests were also run on these variables using gender and college class levels as a grouping variable. Based on mean differences between college classes, it can be seen that underclassmen are significantly more likely than upperclassmen to refrain from posting anything that could be seen negatively. The college class differences for each variable can be seen in Table 6. Mean differences between genders show that females are significantly more likely than males to refrain from posting anything that may be seen negatively, as seen in Table 7. Overall, the only significant differences based on gender and college class level deal with refraining from posting anything that could be seen negatively.

Table 6. Mean College Class Differences
for Twitter Behavior

When Tweeting:	Means		
	Underclassmen	Upperclassmen	**t-value**
Your intent is to get a positive reaction	3.72	3.69	0.22
You are worried about potential reaction	2.65	2.85	-1.50
You refrain from posting anything that could be seen negatively	3.46	3.18	**1.746***
You censor yourself on Twitter	3.49	3.42	0.47
You have a particular audience in mind	3.35	3.28	0.50
You think before you tweet	4.23	4.11	1.07

* p<0.1

** p<0.05

*** p<0.01

Table 7. Mean Gender Differences
for Twitter Behavior

When Tweeting:	Means		
	Male	Female	**t-value**
Your intent is to get a positive reaction	3.64	3.73	-0.64
You are worried about potential reaction	2.81	2.75	0.41
You refrain from posting anything that could be seen negatively	3.07	3.41	**-1.96***
You censor yourself on Twitter	3.48	3.44	0.24
You have a particular audience in mind	3.34	3.29	0.35
You think before you tweet	4.06	4.21	-1.30

* p<0.1

** p<0.05
*** p<0.01

Results for Research Question 3

The third question in this study seeks to answer whether or not college students' self-concepts are congruent with their Twitter identities. Actual and ideal self-concept were tested for congruence with Twitter identity using paired samples t-tests. The scale items used to test the congruence were derived from the Scale to Measure Self-concepts, Person Concepts, and Product Concepts developed by Naresh Malhotra (1981). It is a five-point bipolar scale with the following items: unique/common, rebellious/fitting in, conservative/fashion forward, trendy/familiar, sexy/modest, and homebody/social.

Overall Means. The overall means for each scale item display different aspects of actual self-concept, ideal self-concept, and Twitter identity. Overall, respondents feel that their Twitter identities lean towards being more common, familiar, conservative, fitting in, social than the scale's bipolar counterparts. Based on the means, respondents display that their actual self-concepts are more unique than common, and more fashion forward than conservative. At the same time, actual self-concepts are considered to lean toward fitting in, being more modest, and being more social. The means also indicate respondents feel that their actual selves are equally trendy and familiar. The means for ideal self-concept indicate that respondents would ideally like to be more unique, rebellious, fashion forward, trendy, sexy, and social.

Actual Self-Concept Compared to Twitter Identity. When the congruence between actual self-concept and twitter identity was tested, most of the scale items were found to be significantly different between the respondents' Twitter identities and their actual self-concepts. Based on the mean differences, respondents view their Twitter identity to be more common than their actual selves. Their actual selves are considered to lean more towards

unique. They also view their Twitter to be significantly more towards fitting in, being more

conservative, and being more modest than actual selves. There were no significant

differences between the trendy/familiar and homebody/social scale items. The comparison of

means and t-value for actual self-concept and Twitter identity can be seen in Table 8 below.

Table 8. Comparison of Means for Actual Self-Concept vs. Identity on Twitter

	Means		
Characteristics	Actual Self-Concept	Identity on Twitter	**t-value**
Unique (=1) *vs* Common (=5)	2.42	3.05	**8.359***
Rebellious (=1) *vs* Fitting In (=5)	3.05	3.20	**-2.294**
Conservative (=1) *vs* Fashion Forward (=5)	3.07	2.88	**2.879***
Trendy (=1) *vs* Familiar (=5)	3.00	3.07	-0.911
Sexy (=1) *vs* Modest (=5)	3.18	3.43	**4.334***
Homebody (=1) *vs* Social (=5)	3.24	3.26	-0.294

* $p<0.1$
** $p<0.05$
*** $p<0.01$

Twitter Identity Compared to Ideal Self-Concept. Congruence between identity on

Twitter and ideal self-concept was also tested. All but trendy vs. familiar and sexy vs. modest

were found to be significantly different. Based on the differences in means, ideal selves are

significantly more unique, rebellious, fashion forward, and social than are Twitter identities.

Whereas with the characteristics trendy vs. familiar and sexy vs. modest, while no significant

differences were found, the means indicate ideal self-concepts were also more towards trendy

and sexy than identities on Twitter. The comparison of means and t-values for Twitter

identities and ideal self-concepts can be seen in Table 9.

Table 9. Comparison of Means for Identity on Twitter vs. Ideal Self-Concept

Characteristics	Means		t-value
	Identity on Twitter	Ideal Self-Concept	
Unique (=1) *vs* Common (=5)	3.07	1.7	**-6.71*****
Rebellious (=1) *vs* Fitting In (=5)	3.20	2.62	**4.61*****
Conservative (=1) *vs* Fashion Forward (=5)	2.88	3.52	**17.30*****
Trendy (=1) *vs* Familiar (=5)	3.07	2.28	1.26
Sexy (=1) *vs* Modest (=5)	3.43	2.57	1.58
Homebody (=1) *vs* Social (=5)	3.25	4.09	**22.28*****

* p<0.1

** p<0.05
*** p<0.01

Actual Self Compared to Ideal Self. A paired samples t-test was run to test the

congruence between respondents' actual and ideal self-concepts. All the scale items were

found to be significantly different between the two self-concepts. Based on the means, ideal

self-concept was found to be more unique, rebellious, fashion forward, trendy, sexy, and

social than actual self-concept. The comparison of means and t-values for actual and ideal

self-concepts can be seen in Table 10.

Table 10. Comparison of Means for the Actual vs. Ideal Self-Concepts

Characteristics	Means		
	Actual Self-Concept	Ideal Self-Concept	t-value
Unique (=1) *vs* Common (=5)	2.43	1.69	**10.89*****
Rebellious (=1) *vs* Fitting In (=5)	3.21	2.62	**8.71*****
Conservative (=1) *vs* Fashion Forward (=5)	3.06	3.52	**-5.79*****
Trendy (=1) *vs* Familiar (=5)	2.99	2.28	**9.28*****
Sexy (=1) *vs* Modest (=5)	3.18	2.56	**8.58*****
Homebody (=1) *vs* Social (=5)	3.23	4.01	**-10.21*****

* p<0.1

** p<0.05

*** p<0.01

Results for Research Question 4

   The fourth research question explores the concept of Attention to Social Comparison

Information. It sought to determine if a person's level of Attention to Social Comparison

Information is related to his or her behavior on Twitter. Correlation analyses were run

between the ATSCI scale items and several dependent variables. The dependent variables

tested include the following: imagined audiences, Twitter behaviors and actions, Twitter

activity, uses for Twitter, and Twitter identity.

   ATSCI and Imagined Audiences. A correlation test found a relationship between two

imagined audiences and ATSCI. A person's level of Attention to Social Comparison

Information is significantly positively correlated with the importance they place on general

followers and close friends as imagined audiences. The relationships between ATSCI and

different imagined audiences can be found in Table 11.

**Table 11. Relationship Between Attention to Social
Comparison Information and Imagined Audience**

Imagined Audiences	Correlation with ATSCI
General Followers	**0.235***
Close Friends	**0.205***
Parents	0.04
Other Family Members	0.00
Current Employer	0.09
Future Employers	0.11

* $p < 0.1$

** $p < 0.05$

*** $p < 0.01$

   ATSCI and Twitter Behavior. The correlation test between ATSCI and different

Twitter behavior variables found that there is a significant relationship between three of the

variables. A person's level of Attention to Social Comparison Information was found to be

significantly positively correlated with the following behavior items: "When tweeting, I

tweet with the intent to get a positive reaction", "When tweeting, I refrain from posting

anything that could be seen negatively", and "I think before I tweet". The correlations

between ATSCI and the Twitter behaviors can be seen in Table 12.

Table 12. Relationship Between Attention to Social Comparison Information and Twitter Behavior

When Tweeting:	Correlation with ATSCI
Your intent is to get a positive reaction	**0.168****
You are worried about potential reaction	0.103
You refrain from posting anything that could be seen negatively	**0.231*****
You censor yourself on Twitter	0.121
You have a particular audience in mind	0.053
You think before you tweet	**0.145****

* p<0.1
** p<0.05
*** p<0.01

ATSCI and Twitter Activity. The ATSCI scale items were also tested for a relationship

with different items regarding attitudes towards Twitter activity. The survey question about

Twitter activity included the following items: when it comes to Twitter behavior and

interactions, "Do you enjoy being favorited", "Do you enjoy being retweeted, "Do you enjoy

having a popular tweet", "Do you care about the number of followers you have", and "Do

you try to increase the number of followers you have". The correlation analysis found there is

a significant positive correlation between ATSCI and all those items. The correlations and

their significance levels can be seen in Table 13.

Table 13. Relationship Between Attention to Social Comparison Information and Twitter Activity

When it comes to Twitter Behavior and Interactions:	Correlation with ATSCI
You enjoy being favorited	0.284***
You enjoy being retweeted	0.216***
You enjoy having a popular tweet	0.190***
You care about number of followers	0.284***
You try to increase your number of followers	0.254***

* $p < 0.1$

** $p < 0.05$
*** $p < 0.01$

ATSCI and Uses for Twitter. A correlation analysis was also run to test for a relationship between a person's level of Attention to Social Comparison Information and different uses for Twitter. The only significant relationship found was a significantly positive correlation between level of ATSCI and using Twitter to see what followers are doing. The correlations between ATSCI and the different uses for Twitter can be found in Table 14.

Table 14. Relationship Between Attention to Social Comparison Information and Uses for Twitter

You Use Twitter:	Correlation with ATSCI
For current events	-0.072
To see what followers are doing	0.172**
To share your thoughts and opinions	0.02
To interact with others	0.04
To entertain yourself	0.05

* $p < 0.1$

** $p < 0.05$
*** $p < 0.01$

ATSCI and Twitter Identity. Another analysis tested for a relationship between ATSCI and different Twitter identity items. Significant positive correlations between a person's level

of Attention to Social Comparison Information and respondents' feeling that their Twitter identity is different from how they act in real life and that their Twitter identity is a more interesting version of themselves were found. The correlations between ATSCI and the different Twitter identity items are in Table 15.

Table 15. Relationship Between Attention to Social Comparison Information and Twitter Identity

Your Twitter Identity:	Correlation with ATSCI
Is different than how you act in real life	**0.168**
Is different from how your friends see you	0.135
Reflects who you want to be	0.099
Is a more interesting version of yourself	**0.179**

* $p < 0.1$
** $p < 0.05$
*** $p < 0.01$

Results for Research Question 5

The in-depth interviews indicated that were conducted before survey development indicate that there are differences between genders regarding their general Twitter behavior and attitudes. Therefore, the fifth and final research question deals with whether or not such concrete differences exist. Independent sample t-tests were run for Twitter behavior, Twitter identity, and Twitter activity variables between males and females.

Gender Differences with Twitter Behavior. Based on significance levels, the only significant difference between genders regarding Twitter behaviors indicates that females are more likely than males to refrain from posting anything that could be seen negatively. However, the means indicate that while females are significantly more likely to do so, both genders agree with the statement overall. These results were previously listed and can be seen in Table 7.

Gender Differences with Twitter Identity. In order to test for differences based on gender regarding Twitter identity attitudes, another independent samples t-test was run. The different aspects of Twitter identity that were tested are as follows: "Your Twitter identity is different than how you act in real life", "Your Twitter identity is different from how your friends see you", "Your Twitter identity reflects who you want to be", and "Your Twitter identity is a more interesting version of you". The only significant difference found between genders is with Twitter identity being different from how friends see them. According to the means, females more strongly disagree with the statement that friends see them differently than their Twitter identity than males did. The overall mean gender differences for Twitter identity can be found in Table 16.

Table 16. Mean Gender Differences for Twitter Identity

	Means		
My Twitter Identity:	Males	Females	**t-value**
Is different than how you act in real life	2.19	2.03	1.31
Is different from how friends see you	2.13	1.87	**2.28****
Reflects who you want to be	2.91	3.09	-1.24
Is a more interesting version of you	2.41	2.46	-0.37

* p<0.1
** p<0.05
*** p<0.01

Gender Differences with Twitter Activity. Another independent samples t-test was run to determine what gender differences exist with attitudes towards different Twitter activity. The different items that were looked at included the following: "Do you enjoy being favorited", "Do you enjoy being retweeted", "Do you enjoy being having a popular tweet", "Do you care about the number of followers you have", and lastly, "Do you try to increase

your number of followers". Two significant differences were found between males and females. Based on the means, males are more likely than females to care about the number of followers they have. The other significant difference found between genders was with trying to increase the number of followers. Again, males were found significantly more likely to do so than females. However, while males are more likely than females to engage in these activities, the sample as a whole disagreed with the two statements.

Table 17. Mean Gender Differences for Twitter Activity

When it comes to Twitter Behavior and Interactions:	Means		t-value
	Males	Females	
You enjoy being favorited	4.04	4.11	-0.63
You enjoy being retweeted	4.06	4.13	-0.711
You enjoy having a popular tweet	3.91	3.86	0.418
You care about number of followers	2.65	2.26	**2.63***
You try to increase your number of followers	2.57	2.01	**3.66***

* $p<0.1$

** $p<0.05$

*** $p<0.01$

DISCUSSION

Imagined Audiences

The analyses conducted in this study shed light on what imagined audiences are most significant to college students. As discussed in the Literature Review, the concept of imagined audiences is one that comes into play when college students use Twitter. Imagined audiences are constructed by users, in this case college students, to better present themselves (Marwick and Boyd, 2010). The imagined audiences focused on for this study are those most relevant to college students, with these being general followers, close friends, parents, other family members, current employers, and future employers. Based on the findings from the in-depth interviews, it seemed there could be some differences between males and females as well as under and upperclassmen as far as which imagined audiences are considered more important. Based on the interviews, it was expected that upperclassmen would feel more strongly that future employers are the most important imagined audience given these students are the closest to graduation. Furthermore, it was expected that females cared significantly more about their close friends and general followers as imagined audiences. After statistically comparing these groups, no significant differences were found. This means that there are no differences in which imagined audiences are most important to college students, regardless of class level or gender.

This study also found that future employers are considered the most important imagined audience to college students. It is possible that this is due to the fact that future employment is in most cases highly relevant to college students. The two imagined audiences college students do not feel are important are parents and other family members. This could be because these audiences don't use Twitter as much, or because college students don't

place as much of an importance on what family thinks of them. Perhaps place a different amount of importance on family as an imagined audience on different social media platforms.

Alterations in Twitter Behavior

Imagined audiences impact how a person presents themselves on social media. This study explores the concept further by determining to what extent college students alter what they post on Twitter for the sake of these imagined audiences. After analyzing the respondents' willingness to engage in certain Twitter behaviors so as to alter what they post, it was found that college students do think before they tweet. They also agree that when tweeting, their intent is to get a positive reaction from their imagined audiences and that they censor themselves on Twitter. In addition, they have a particular audience in mind when they tweet, and they refrain from posting anything that could be seen negatively. However, they also say that they are no that worried about the potential reaction to their tweets. It is interesting that while the sample actively intends to get a positive reaction, they overall are not worried about what the reaction to their tweets might be. Perhaps they do not worry about the potential reaction because they already engage in all the other behaviors intended to make their tweets more appealing.

To further explore how college students alter their posts for imagined audiences, potential relationships with gender and college level were examined. Females were found to be significantly more likely to refrain from posting anything that could be seen negatively than males. This is an interesting finding considering females do not place significantly more importance on their imagined audiences than males do. Moreover, underclassmen were found to be significantly more likely to refrain from posting anything that could be seen negatively.

From the in-depth interviews it seemed more likely that upperclassmen would more strongly agree with this statement because they are closer to graduation. With future employers being the most important imagined audience for all college students, it would be expected that upperclassmen would be more susceptible to being viewed by this audience and therefore refrain from posting anything that could be seen negatively. Perhaps the reason underclassmen are more likely to do so should be a topic for future research.

Self-Concepts and Twitter Identities

Self-concept, as discussed in the Literature Review, has three parts: actual, ideal, and social self-concept. This study explored the congruence of actual and ideal self-concepts with the Twitter identities of college students. In a way, there are parallels between the social self-concept and Twitter identities because both deal with the perception of how peers and other audiences see the person.

The means for Twitter identity fell more towards common (vs. unique), fitting in (vs. rebellious), conservative (vs. fashion forward), familiar (vs. trendy), modest (vs. sexy), and social (vs. homebody). The pattern of responses indicates that the Twitter identities of college students overall lean towards standing out less and focus on appearing neutral. Perhaps this is because college students on social media overall do not want any negative attention brought to them, so they focus on blending in and being one of many on Twitter. It is also interesting that on a platform where they could potentially reinvent themselves and become closer to their ideal selves, college students still desire to be a part of a crowd. Considering future employers are the most significant imagined audience, it is possible they do so in order to prevent leaving a bad impression. Focusing on blending in ensures that a bad impression is not made, and therefore they remain in good standing with their imagined

audiences.

Students' actual self-concept displayed means that were significantly different from all but two characteristics when compared to students' Twitter identities. Actual self-concept was found to be significantly more unique, rebellious, fashion forward, and sexy than Twitter identity. This finding further indicates that college students' Twitter identities are altered versions of themselves and that they present themselves on Twitter in a way that is more appealing to their imagined audiences. Overall means for the sample show that the actual self-concept for the sample overall leans towards being unique, fitting in, fashion forward, modest, and social. This means that college students feel they stand out more in real life than they do on Twitter. When compared with ideal self-concept, actual self was found to be significantly different for every characteristic. Actual self is less unique, rebellious, fashion forward, trendy sexy, and social than ideal self. Based on this finding, it is evident that college students would ideally like to stand out and have a stronger personality than they feel they currently do.

Ideal self-concept was also compared with Twitter identity to determine if any significant differences exist. Results indicate that the ideal self-concept is significantly more unique, rebellious, fashion forward, and social than the Twitter identity of the college student. This finding is consistent with the fact that college students feel they would like to become more distinctive, but it is interesting that they do not use Twitter as a way to do this. The sample's actual self-concept was overall less distinctive, and the Twitter identity was even less when compared to actual self-concept. This result shows that college students would like to become a less ordinary version of their Twitter and actual selves. Perhaps this is because college students want to feel special and less ordinary, but do not want to risk

standing out too much both on Twitter and in real life due to possible repercussions.

Attention to Social Comparison Information Relationships

Attention to Social Comparison Information (ATSCI) is a concept regarding the extent to which a person pays attention to the reactions of others to their behavior, along with whether they are concerned about those reactions. A person with a high level of ATSCI is more likely to compare their behavior to others. Analyses were run and ATSCI levels were found to be related to the importance of imagined audiences, Twitter behavior and activity, uses for Twitter, and Twitter identity.

Analyses found that college students' levels of Attention to Social Comparison Information is related to the importance placed on general followers and close friends as imagined audiences. The importance of both these audiences is significantly and positively correlated with ATSCI. This means the higher the level of Attention to Social Comparison Information, the more importance the student places on general followers and close friends as imagined audiences. It is possible that this relationship exists because both audiences are socially important audiences to college students. They are the audiences college students interact with on a daily basis. Essentially this means that if college students have high levels of Attention to Social Comparison Information, they are likely to notice and care about what imagined audiences think about their Twitter identity and behavior. Specifically, college students will notice what the imagined audiences they are most closely aligned with think: general followers and close friends. This is different from college students overall, who place more importance on future employers.

ATSCI was also found to be significantly positively correlated with certain aspects of a college students' Twitter behavior, particularly the following: tweeting with the intent to

get a positive reaction, refraining from posting anything that could be seen negatively, and thinking before tweeting. College students that have higher levels of ATSCI are more likely to engage in these Twitter behaviors. Perhaps this relationship exists because those behaviors are related to the reaction of those who see the tweets, and ATSCI deals with such a reaction. Perhaps this finding means that college students with higher levels of ATSCI are also more likely to engage in these behaviors online.

A significant relationship between ATSCI and Twitter activity was also found. A significant positive correlation was found between a college students' level of Attention to Social Comparison Information and his or her enjoyment of being favorited, retweeted, having a popular tweet, caring about number of followers, and trying to increase number of followers. Based on the concept of Attention to Social Comparison Information, it makes sense that a college student wanting to receive validation in the form of retweets, favorites, and followers would have a higher level of ATSCI.

Attention to Social Comparison Information is largely not significantly correlated with how likely a college student is to use Twitter for different purposes. The different uses for Twitter that were tested include keeping up with current events, seeing what followers are doing, sharing thoughts and opinions, interacting with others, and entertaining yourself. The only significant relationship found was between ATSCI and the use of Twitter to see what followers are doing. It makes sense that this relationship exists, because seeing what followers are doing on Twitter is a manifestation of higher levels of ATSCI, which deals with comparing ones behavior to others. It is possible that college students with high levels of ATSCI are more likely to use Twitter to see what followers are doing because they want to ensure their behavior is acceptable in comparison.

The last analysis tested for a relationship between ATSCI and college students'

Twitter identities. Level of Attention to Social Comparison Information is significantly and

positively correlated with college students' feelings that their Twitter identities are both

different from how they act in real life and a more interesting version of themselves. It has

been established that college students alter what they post and how they appear on Twitter

compared to real life. It is possible that college students' level of Attention to Social

Comparison Information leads to alteration of their Twitter identities and making themselves

more interesting, but a relationship does not exist between the two constructs.

Overall Gender Differences

From the in-depth interviews, there was an indication that there are possible gender

differences with college students' Twitter behaviors, attitudes, and experiences. Indeed,

statistical differences were found between the genders regarding Twitter behavior, feelings

about Twitter identity, and Twitter activity.

As previously discussed, one significant gender difference exists in the Twitter

behavior of college students: females were found to be significantly more likely than males

to refrain from posting anything that could be seen negatively. It has been established that

imagined audiences have an impact on the Twitter behavior of college students. However, no

gender differences were found in the relative importance placed on imagined audiences.

Therefore, it is interesting that females were found to be more likely to refrain from posting

anything that could be seen negatively. This might be related to gender role expectations,

where women are generally expected to be more socially oriented.

Analyses conducted also reveal significant gender differences in Twitter identity.

Both genders overall disagreed that their identity on Twitter is different from how their

friends see them; however, females were found to disagree with this statement significantly more than males. This would indicate that males' Twitter identities are further away from their actual or social self-concepts than females. Further research needs to be done to determine exactly why this difference exists.

The final gender differences were found with regard to Twitter activity. Males are significantly more likely than females to both care about their number of followers and try to increase their number of followers. The overall means for these Twitter activity statements indicate that both genders overall disagree with the statement. However, males disagree significantly less strongly than females, making them more likely to both care about and try to increase their number of followers. It is important to note that out of all the different Twitter activity items tested, the significant gender differences that arose involved the actual number of Twitter followers.

Conclusion

Findings indicate that there are differences in the congruence between college students' various self-concepts and their Twitter identities. These results show that Twitter identities are more about conforming to the general social expectations surrounding college students. It is interesting that this is the case given that Twitter provides them the opportunity for college students to reinvent their personalities. Twitter identities encompass more conformist social selves as opposed to representing actual or ideal selves. Given that future employers are the most important imagined audience to college students, it is possible that their Twitter identities conform and do not stand out in an attempt to be more appropriate so as to maximize future employment opportunities. Furthermore, the relationships that were found between ATSCI and Twitter behavior, activity, uses, as well as the importance of

different imagined audiences indicate that college students who pay more attention to what

others think use Twitter more for social image cultivation.

LIMITATIONS & FUTURE RESEARCH

Limitations

This study has some notable limitations, the first of which is the ability of the results to be generalized. Given that the sample was partially drawn via chain referral/snowball method, it may not be representative of the entire Twitter-using college student population. Furthermore, there were quite a bit more female than male survey respondents. Approximately sixty-seven percent of the respondents were female, meaning there were almost twice as many female respondents than there were male. The results of this study are also only representative of college students residing in the United States. The findings may be different in other countries; therefore, other cross-cultural studies would need to be conducted.

Future Research

Based on the limitations, one suggestion for future research would be to replicate this study on a representative random sample of college students currently using Twitter residing both in the United States and abroad. This could externally validate the findings from this study as well as provide support for inferences drawn in the discussion. Furthermore, this study could be expanded to the use of other social media outlets. While Twitter is a very popular form of social media among college students, this study could be replicated with Facebook, Instagram, Tumblr, etc. The findings could be compared across studies to see if differences exist between various social medias. Specifically, the findings related to importance placed on different imagined audiences could be further explored on other social media platforms. Certainly another suggestion for future research would be to determine possible differences in the Attention to Social Comparison Information levels of college

students who use Twitter compared to those who do not. Overall, these possibilities for future

research should focus on better understanding the levels of congruence between the online

identities of college students with their different self-concepts, and why such levels exist.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: In-Depth Interview Questions

1. Why do you use social media/Twitter?

2. How often do you use social media/Twitter?

3. What different features do you utilize on Twitter? (favoriting, moments/discover, retweeting)

4. What is your favorite feature? Why?

5. For what reasons do you tweet? What different things prompt you to tweet?

6. How do you interact with others on Twitter?

7. To whom are your tweets usually directed?

8. What audience do you have in mind when you post? Who do you imagine is seeing your tweets? Who else?

9. What functions does Twitter serve for you?

10. Do you ever censor yourself on social media? Why/why not?

11. How much do you think about other people when you tweet? Does it impact what you say? How?

12. How much does your number of followers matter to you?

13. Do you care if people favorite/retweet you or not? Why/why not?

14. How does having a popular tweet/post make you feel?

15. Is there one topic/subject you often tweet about? What is it and why?

16. What factors influence what you post/tweet about?

17. Do you think about people's responses? Whose responses do you think about most when you tweet?

18. What kinds of pages/accounts do you follow?

19. Are there any accounts you pay particular attention to? Why?

20. Have you ever tweeted/posted with the intent to get a positive reaction? Explain

21. Do you think your tweets accurately reflect your personality/self-concept? Explain

22. When someone reads your tweets/posts, what do you think that makes them think about you as a person?

23. How is your Twitter identity/presence different from your identity/presence on other social media platforms?

24. How do you think your Twitter identity is different from how you act?

25. Is there anything about your Twitter/social media habits and practices that I did not ask that you would like to share/expand on?

Appendix II: Survey

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my Honors Thesis Research Project. Your responses will be kept confidential. The survey should take approximately 5 to 10 minutes. Thank you!

*If no is selected, survey is automatically finished

Q1 Are you a college student?*
- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)

Q2 Are you a current user of Twitter?*
- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)

Q3 What is your college classification?
- ○ Freshman (1)
- ○ Sophomore (2)
- ○ Junior (3)
- ○ Senior (4)
- ○ Graduate Student (5)

Q4 What is your gender?
- ○ Male (1)
- ○ Female (2)
- ○ Unspecified (3)

Q5 Do you ever post your own tweets?
- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)

Q6 Which category best describes how often you use Twitter?
- ○ Once or twice a week (1)
- ○ Once a day (2)
- ○ Two to three times a day (3)
- ○ More than three times a day (4)

Q7 When thinking about my Twitter usage...

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
I spend several hours a week on Twitter. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Compared to most people, I don't spend a lot of time on Twitter. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
I look at Twitter multiple times a day. (3)	○	○	○	○	○

Q8 Think about how you see yourself, and being as honest as you can be about who you actually are, rate yourself on the following characteristics.

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)
Unique:Common (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Rebellious:Fitting in (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Conservative:Fashion forward (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Trendy:Familiar (4)	○	○	○	○	○
Sexy:Modest (5)	○	○	○	○	○

Q9 Score items on a scale of always false to always true.

	Always false (1)	Mostly false (2)	Neither true nor false (3)	Mostly true (4)	Always true (5)
It is my feeling that if everyone else in a group is behaving a certain manner, this must be the proper way to behave. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
I actively avoid wearing clothes that are not my style. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
At parties I usually try to behave in a manner that makes me fit in. (3)	○	○	○	○	○
When I am uncertain how to act in a social situation, I look to the behavior of	○	○	○	○	○

others for clues. (4)					
I try to pay attention to the reactions of others to my behavior in order avoid being out of place. (5)	○	○	○	○	○
I find that I tend to pick up slang expressions from others and use them as part of my own vocabulary. (6)	○	○	○	○	○
I tend to pay attention to what others are wearing. (7)	○	○	○	○	○
The slightest look of disapproval in the eyes of a person with whom I am interacting is enough to make me change my approach. (8)	○	○	○	○	○
It is important to me to fit into the group I am with. (9)	○	○	○	○	○
My behavior often depends	○	○	○	○	○

on how I feel others wish me to behave. (10)					
I usually keep up with clothing style changes by watching what others wear. (11)	○	○	○	○	○
When I am in a social situation, I tend not to follow the crowd, but instead to behave in a manner that suits my particular mood at the time. (12)	○	○	○	○	○

Q10 When I tweet, I think about how _____ will react to my tweets.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
General followers (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Close friends (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Parents (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Other family members (4)	○	○	○	○	○
Current employer (5)	○	○	○	○	○
Future employers (6)	○	○	○	○	○

Q11 When tweeting _____ .

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
I tweet/post with the intent to get a positive reaction. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
I refrain from posting anything that might be seen negatively. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
I am worried about the potential reaction to my tweets. (3)	○	○	○	○	○
I censor myself on Twitter. (4)	○	○	○	○	○
I think about what I say before I tweet. (5)	○	○	○	○	○
I have a particular audience in mind when I tweet. (6)	○	○	○	○	○

Q12 Think about your identity on Twitter, and being as honest as you can be about how you appear on Twitter, rate yourself on the following characteristics.

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)
Unique:Common (1)	O	O	O	O	O
Rebellious:Fitting in (2)	O	O	O	O	O
Conservative:Fashion forward (3)	O	O	O	O	O
Trendy:Familiar (4)	O	O	O	O	O
Sexy:Modest (5)	O	O	O	O	O
Homebody:Social (6)	O	O	O	O	O

Q13 When it comes to my Twitter behavior and interactions...

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
I enjoy being favorited. (1)	O	O	O	O	O
I enjoy being retweeted. (2)	O	O	O	O	O
Having a popular tweet makes me feel good. (3)	O	O	O	O	O
I care about the number of followers I have. (4)	O	O	O	O	O
I try to increase the number of followers I have. (5)	O	O	O	O	O

Q14 I use Twitter _____.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
To keep up with current events. (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
To see what my followers are doing. (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
To share my thoughts and opinions. (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
To interact with other people. (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
To entertain myself. (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q15 Think about the kind of person you would like to be, and being as honest as you can be about who you ideally want to be, rate yourself on the following characteristics.

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)
Unique:Common (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Rebellious:Fitting in (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Conservative:Fashion forward (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Trendy:Familiar (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Sexy:Modest (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q16 My Twitter identity _____.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
Is different from how I act in real life. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Is different from how my friends see me as a person. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Reflects who I would like to be. (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Is a more interesting version of myself. (4)	○	○	○	○	○