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*Who Am I? The Effect of Age on the Relationship Between One's Self and Reflected Appraisals*

This research project was originally conducted to see the effect of age on the influence of others on one's self image and self-perception. If one's self-image became more independent as one ages, then the correlation between one's self and reflected appraisals would decrease as age increases. Subjects were given a survey that asked questions about their self-appraisals as well as questions about different reflected appraisals with respect to individuals that the subjects interact with frequently. Afterwards, the correlations between the self and reflected appraisals for each of the categories that the questions were based on were calculated for every age of the subjects. The average correlations across all categories were also calculated for each age. The average correlations for each age across all the categories showed that generally, as age increases, the correlation also increases. More specifically, the correlations are significantly increasing until around the age of 20; after which point the correlations increase more slowly and appear to be plateauing. Although the original problem statement was testing the effect of age on the influence that others have on one's self image and perception, the concern that it was not the influence of others that was being tested, but rather one's awareness of other's thoughts and feelings was being tested. This led to the possible conclusion that as age increases, one's empathy also increases; increasing significantly until the age of 20 and leveling off afterwards.