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Psychometric properties and correlates of the Polish version of the Contingent Self-Esteem Scale (CSES)

Abstract: In general, it is beneficial and adaptive to have high self-esteem; however, contingent self-esteem depending on approval is not so advantageous. This article presents research on a Polish version of the Contingent Self-Esteem Scale (CSES), which measures contingent self-esteem. The CSES was administered on a total of 1,199 participants; a range of other instruments were also used to establish the validity of the CSES. The CSES proved to have acceptable internal consistency and validity and factor analyses revealed that it contains four factors: vulnerability to negative opinions, dependence on physical attractiveness, dependence on opinions, and dependence on self-standards. Contingent self-esteem was positively correlated with neuroticism, agreeableness, ruminating, anxiety, and maladaptive perfectionism; it was negatively correlated with general self-esteem and self-efficacy. Mediational analyses confirmed the hypothesis that low general self-esteem causes high rumination about oneself, which in turn is related to high contingent self-esteem.

Keywords: contingent self-esteem; CSES; psychometric adaptation

Introduction

Self-esteem is considered one of the most important (Leary & MacDonald, 2003) and most researched (Bushman, Moeller, & Crock, 2011) constructs in psychology. One of its basic dimensions is its level. A lot of research suggests that high self-esteem is much more adaptive than low self-esteem (e.g. Crocker & Knight, 2005; Taylor & Brown, 1988). However, early on it became clear that there is "more to self-esteem than whether it is high or low" (Kernis, Cornell, Sun, Berry, & Harlow, 1993, p. 1090). More recently, Deci and Ryan (1995) distinguished between *true* and *contingent* self-esteem, the latter one referring to "feelings about oneself that result from – indeed, are dependent on – matching some standard of excellence or living up to some interpersonal or intrapsychic expectations" (Deci & Ryan, 1995, p. 32). More generality, Kernis (2003) distinguished between stable and fragile high self-esteem. Stable self-esteem is genuine, true, stable and congruent with implicit feelings of self-worth, while fragile one is defensive, unstable, discrepant and contingent.

The main aim of the present article is to present research on a Polish adaptation of a tool for measuring contingent self-esteem (CSE): *The Contingent Self-Esteem Scale* (CSES; Paradise & Kernis, 1999). It was used in the present research to explore CSE by studying its structure and correlates.

Contingent self-esteem

As stated above, CSE is dependent on matching standards. It is directly linked and dependent on perceived successes and failures (Park, Crocker, & Mickelson, 2004). It is fragile, because it has a secure level only when a person is able to meet the standards on which his/her self-esteem is based (Deci & Ryan, 1995; Kernis, 2003). A person's sense of worth depends on some standards which may be self-imposed or external. The level of dependence on outside admiration may be high (Deci & Ryan, 1995). CSE remains high only if the person is successful at satisfying relevant criteria. According to yet another definition, CSE is "the extent to which self-worth is based on standards or expectations regarding social approval, appearance, performance, or other criteria" (Neighbors, Larimer, Geisner, & Knee, 2004, p. 208). In contrast to individuals with secure high self-esteem, those with a contingent high self-esteem tend to be very

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dependent on feedback from the environment and their self-esteem is constantly challenged; this leads to constant need to enhance and protect it (Kernis, 2003). According to Zeigler-Hill, Besser and King (2011), all the benefits of high self-esteem are available only to persons with secure self-esteem.

Measuring contingent self-esteem

Studies of CSE have been carried out using two somewhat different models. The first one assumed that CSE is a relatively stable general or global trait (Deci & Ryan, 1995; Kernis, 2003). In this approach no specific domains in which self-esteem is founded are analyzed. An example of an operationalization stemming from this perspective is the CSES used in the present research, originally developed by Paradise and Kernis (1999) as a unidimensional measure. In contrast, the second approach assumes that people differ in domains in which self-esteem is founded. Such an idea was noted by James as early as in 1890:

> I, who for the time have staked my all on being a psychologist, am mortified if others know much more psychology than I. But I am contented to wallow in the grossest ignorance of Greek. My deficiencies there give me no sense of personal humiliation at all. Had I pretensions to be a linguist, it would have been just the reverse (James, 1890, p. 310).

Tools rooted in this model aim at identifying the specific domain on which self-esteem is dependent. A well-known example is Contingencies of Self-Worth Scale (CSW, Crocker, Luhtanen, Cooper, & Bouvrette, 2003). It assesses seven domains on which self-worth may be staked: academics, appearance, approval from others, competition, family support, God's love, and virtue. Apart from the CSW, there are a few tools to measure some specific domains on which self-esteem is dependent. One is the *Performance-Based Self-esteem Scale* (Hallsten, Josephson, & Torgén, 2005). The authors declare it to be a measure of general self-esteem contingency, however, three out of its four items relate to the tendency to base self-esteem on the quality of work. Another tool is *Friendship Contingent Self-Esteem* (Cambron, Acitelli, & Steinberg, 2010) measuring the extent to which people tend to base their self-esteem on the quality of their friendships. Another is *Competence-based and Relation-based Self-Esteem Measures* (Johnson & Blom, 2007), which measures the two areas of CSE mentioned in its title. Also, *Relationship-contingent self-esteem* (Knee, Canevello, Bush, & Cook, A., 2008; Knee, Patrick, & Neighbors, 2001) refers to an unhealthy form of self-esteem that depends on one's relations. Further, there is *Child-invested Contingent Self-Esteem Scale* (Assor, Roth, Israeli-Halevi, Freed, & Deci, 2007) tapping the extent to which parents' self-esteem is contingent on children's achievement.

The *Stability of Self Scale* (Rosenberg, 1965) is also worth noting as it measures the subjective stability of self-esteem. Likewise, Sowislo, Orth and Meier (2014)

applied an interesting method for measuring contingent self-esteem, using daily diary data and computing a statistical index of self-esteem contingency capturing the degree to which the participant's daily self-esteem fluctuates in response to events occurring on the same day.

Correlates of contingent self-esteem

First of all, CSE was shown to be negatively related to health: it correlated positively with depression and suicidal tendencies (Cambron & Acitelli, 2010; Cambron et al., 2010; Lakey, Hirsch, Nelson, & Nsamenang, 2014; but see: Sowislo et al., 2014), as well as with level of alcohol consumption and the amount of problems caused by alcohol consumption (Neighbors et al., 2004). Also, CSE, as measured by the CSE subscale of the *Pathological Narcissism Inventory* (Pincus et al., 2009) was positively related to proactive and reactive aggression in adolescents (Barry, McDougall, Anderson, & Bindon, 2018), especially when rumination was high (Turner & White, 2015). Performance-based self-esteem predicted burnout and in some analyses mediated the impact of stressors on burnout (Blom, 2012; Dahlin, Joneborg, & Runeson, 2007). Interestingly, performance-based self-esteem was shown to increase from the first to the third years of education for the nursing students (Hallsten, Rudman, & Gustavsson, 2012). Positive correlation between CSE and instability of self-esteem has been shown (Patrick, Neighbors, & Knee, 2004). Competence-based self-esteem correlated positively with perfectionism and toxic achieving, while relation-based self-confidence was related to affiliation and dependency needs (Johnson & Blom, 2007). Also, relationship-based self-esteem was positively related to all of the dimensions of the CSW apart from God's love, as well as to private and public self-consciousness and social anxiety (Knee et al., 2008). Relationship-specific contingent self-esteem predicted relationship-specific self-presentation, while friendship-contingent self-esteem predicted self-presentation in both friendships and romantic relationships (Øverup, Brunson, & Acitelli, 2015). CSE predicted compulsive buying, and this relationship was mediated by fear of negative evaluation and social identity (Roberts, Manolis, & Pullig, 2014). Vulnerable narcissism was related positively to all dimensions of the CSW, apart from God's love, while grandiose narcissism correlated positively with competition CSW and negatively with Others' approval CSW (Zeigler-Hill, Clark, & Pickard, 2008). Finally, contingent and general self-esteem were negatively related in most existing research (e.g. Barry et al., 2018; Cambron & Acitelli, 2010; Crocker et al., 2003; Johnson & Blom, 2007; Knee et al., 2008; Lakey et al., 2014; Wuyts, Vansteenkiste, Soenens, & Assor, 2015; Zeigler-Hill et al., 2011).

In this article, research using the Polish adaptation of the CSES (Paradise & Kernis, 1999) is presented. We are aware of only three cross-cultural adaptations of the CSES: a Hungarian one (Sági, 2015), in which the internal reliability of the scale was between .72 and .91, a Japanese one (Ito, 2005, alpha = .80), and a German one

(Schwinger, 2008; alpha = .86). Given this scarcity, it might be interesting to explore the psychometric and correlational properties of the CSES in a different culture, as this may shed some light on the validity of the construct itself.

To assess its construct validity, it was assumed that the results on the CSES should be negatively related to general (not fragile) self-esteem because these two constructs are negatively related almost by definition: stable non-contingent high self-esteem precludes CSE, and vice versa. We also assumed that CSE would be positively related to ruminating (especially about oneself) because this may create uncertainty: a person willing to make his self-esteem dependent on information from the environment may be prone to continuously think about this environment, analyzing whether it provides the expected praises. In contrast, a person who does not worry much about feedback from the environment may be less willing to ruminate about it.

Given all these premises, a mediation hypothesis was formulated which postulated that general self-esteem influences CSE *via* rumination: the lower the general self-esteem, the more rumination occurs; the more rumination, the more fragile is the self-esteem. A strong negative relationship between general (noncontingent) self-esteem and rumination has already been found (Szpitalak & Polczyk, 2015). In summary, it may be that low general self-esteem promotes rumination about oneself, which in turn may result in enhanced CSE. We did not expect such a mediated relationship in the case of ruminating about the outer social environment. A person prone to rumination about him/herself may also tend to ruminate about the social environment, but there is no reason to expect that ruminating about the environment would threaten someone's own self-esteem by making it fragile and dependent on contingencies.

Other relationships related to analysing the construct validity of the CSES concern trait anxiety, neuroticism, perceived self-efficacy, and adaptive and maladaptive perfectionism. Anxiety, as well as neuroticism, was expected to be positively correlated with CSE because seeking confirmation from the environment must necessarily fail in a number of cases; this may create anxiety and unstable self-esteem may generally be related to unstable emotionality and anxiety (Fecenec, 2008; Roberts & Monroe, 1992; Szpitalak & Polczyk, 2015). Perceived self-efficacy was expected to be lower in the case of enhanced CSE because people who think they are very effective should not seek much approval from the environment. It was hypothesized that maladaptive perfectionism would be positively correlated with CSE because constantly looking for approval may cause a person to look for perfection not in a "healthy" way, but rather compulsively and neurotically. A constant discrepancy between ideal self, ought self, and actual self is typical of maladaptive perfectionism (Snyder, 1997; Szczucka, 2010) and may contribute to CSE. In contrast, "healthy" adaptive perfectionism should not be related to CSE.

Finally, yielding to various harmful temptations was chosen to assess the discriminant validity of the CSES,

as there were no a priori reasons to expect correlations between CSE and yielding to temptations.

Method

Participants

Results of 1,199 participants were analysed (722 women and 475 men; two participants did not reveal their age). Their mean age was 25.0, *SD* = 10.3, range 14–74). This total sample was used to analyse the psychometric properties of the CSES. Various subsamples were used to analyse the correlations between the CSES and other tests (exact *Ns* stated in relevant tables).

Procedure

The participants were tested either individually or in groups, Paper versions of the tests were used, apart from the MAC-S, which involved a web-based procedure.

Instruments (apart from the CSES described in the Introduction)

Contingent Self-Esteem Scale

CSES was designed as a unidimensional questionnaire consisting of 15 items, e.g., "My overall feelings about myself are heavily influenced by how much other people like and accept me". The statements are answered on a five-point Likert scale, from "Not at all like me" to "Very much like me". Kernis (2003) reported a four-week stability of .77 and internal consistency of the CSES as .85; these results are identical to those of Patrick, Neighbors and Knee (2004). Neighbors et al., (2004) estimated the internal reliability of CSES as .79.

Personality traits

NEO Five Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI; McCrae & Costa, 1985; Polish adaptation: Zawadzki, Strelau, Szcze-paniak, & Śliwińska, 1998) is a well-known inventory designed to measure the five major personality domains: Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness. It includes 60 items answered on a 5-point Likert scale. The Neuroticism subscale was used to verify the postulated hypothesis, the remaining factors were analysed for exploratory reasons.

Self-esteem

Self-Liking/Self-Competence Scale-Revised (SLCS-R; Tafarodi & Swann, 2001; Polish adaptation: Szpitalak & Polczyk, 2015) is a 16-item questionnaire measuring two dimensions of self-esteem: self-competence and self-liking. Answers are given on a 5-point Likert scale.

Rumination

Rumination Questionnaire (RQ; Baryła & Wojciszke, 2005) measures rumination – compulsive or recurring thoughts that are unrelated to actions that are being currently executed. It includes two subscales: ruminating about oneself and ruminating about the social world. It consists of 20 statements, 10 for each subscale, rated on a 5-point Likert scale.

Anxiety

State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI; Spielberger, Gorsuch, & Lushene, 1970, Polish adaptation: Spielberger, Strelau, Tysarczyk, & Wrześniewski, 1997) measures anxiety conceptualized as the current state and a general trait. It consists of 20 adjectives rated by subjects on a 4-point Likert scale.

Self-efficacy

Generalized Self-Efficacy Scale (GSES; Schwarzer, 1993; Polish adaptation: Juczyński, 2009) is a tool designed to measure a general sense of perceived self-efficacy: the belief that one can perform novel or difficult tasks and cope with adversity. It includes 10 items scored on a 4-point scale.

Perfectionism

Adaptive and Maladaptive Perfectionism Questionnaire (Szczucka, 2010) consists of 35 items measuring two aspects of perfectionism: adaptive perfectionism, which is "healthy" and characterized by satisfaction derived from achieving high quality results while tolerating imperfections; maladaptive perfectionism is characterized by extreme standards and expectations, a self-critical attitude and anxiety caused by imperfections.

Yielding to temptations

Yielding to Temptations Scale (Brycz, 2010) is a tool intended to measure the tendency to yield to harmful temptations that threaten important values. The values on which the tool is based were adapted from the 10-value system by Schwartz and Rubel-Lifschitz (2009). The values were grouped into three factors: safety, duties, and promotion.

Results

The mean of the general score on the CSES was 3.4 ($SD = 0.6$ range: 1.4–3.4); this is slightly above the "neutral" answer. Women scored higher than men did ($Ms = 3.5$ *vs*. 3.1; SDs respectively: 0.6 and 0.5; $t(1195) = 11.2$, $p < .001$, Cohen $d = 0.7$). The correlation with age was negative and significant due to the large sample, but very small ($r(1195) = -.15$, $p < .001$).

The internal reliability as measured by the Cronbach alpha was .81 and McDonald's omega total was .85 (McDonald, 1999); four-week test-retest stability was .78. A confirmatory factor analysis verifying the unidimensional factor structure postulated by Paradise and Kernis (1999) was performed. As the questions on the CSES are answered on an ordered scale, the method of weighted least squares with mean and variance adjustment was applied, as recommended by Reise, Moore, and Haviland (2010). The analyses were done with *lavaan* software (Rosseel, 2012) running under the *R* Environment (R Core Team, 2016). The results were as follows: $DWLS$ (90, $N = 1199$) = 1986.7, $p < .001$, $CFI = .90$, $TLI = .88$, $RMSEA = .13$ [.12, .14].

As the results indicate that a unidimensional structure does not fit the data well, an exploratory factor analysis with VARIMAX rotation was performed on half of the general sample ($n = 600$) to explore the factor structure of the tool (Table 1).

Table 1. Factor loadings after VARIMAX rotation

	Factor			
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**
15. Even in the face of rejection, my feelings of self-worth remain unaffected. (R)	.83			
9. My feelings of self-worth are basically unaffected when other people treat me badly. (R)	.76			
2. Even in the face of failure, my feelings of self-worth remain unaffected. (R)	.72			
13. Even on a day when I don't look my best, my feelings of self-worth remain unaffected. (R)	.54			
6. An important measure of my worth is how physically attractive I am.		.81		
14. My overall feelings about myself are heavily influenced by how good I look.		.79		
8. If I am told that I look good, I feel better about myself in general.		.69		
4. My overall feelings about myself are heavily influenced by how much other people like and accept me.			.73	
10. An important measure of my worth is how well I perform up to the standards that other people have set for me.			.70	
7. My overall feelings about myself are heavily influenced by what I believe other people are saying or thinking about me.			.64	
5. If I get along well with somebody, I feel better about myself overall.			.63	
3. A big determinant of how much I like myself is how well I perform up to the standards that I have set for myself.				.73
1. An important measure of my worth is how competently I perform.				.71
12. When my actions do not live up to my expectations, it makes me feel dissatisfied with myself.				.64
Cronbach alphas (McDonald's omega total)	.74 (.79)	.75 (.86)	.73 (.82)	.55 (.64)

(R) reversed.

Four factors were extracted, explaining about 57.4% of the variance of the scale. They were labelled and interpreted as follows: (1) vulnerability, i.e. the inability to ignore negative opinions and rejection from others (reverse coding of questions); (2) dependence on attractiveness, i.e. self-esteem conditioned on perceived physical self-attractiveness; (3) dependence on opinions, i.e. the tendency to depend on the opinions of others; (4) dependence on self-standards, i.e. conditioning the self-esteem based on perceived fulfilling of one's own standards.

This factor structure was verified on the second half of the general sample ($n = 599$) by means of confirmatory factor analysis. The minimum function test statistic (DWLS) was 279.90 ($df = 71$); this was statistically significant. This was obviously due to the large sample size, but the fit indices indicated a good fit: $GFI = .99$, $AGFI = .97$, $CFI = .98$, $TLI = .97$, $RMSEA = .07$ [.06, .08].

As the confirmatory factor analyses indicated a good fit of the four-factor model, all following analyses included the general score on the CSES, as well as the subscales computed according to the factors. To start with, correlational analyses were performed between the general score on the CSES, as well as its subscales and the remaining variables (Table 2).

In accordance with the predictions, neuroticism, maladaptive perfectionism, and anxiety were positively related to CSE. Negative correlation emerged in the case of perceived self-efficacy. As for the remaining traits of the Big Five, in the case of extraversion only one very small positive correlation was significant: depending on one's own attractiveness. Openness was negatively related to depending on opinions. Agreeableness was positively related to CSE, apart from subscales relating to depending on own attractiveness and standards. Finally, consciousness was negatively related to CSE, but in the case of depending on standards, the correlation was positive.

Most correlations (eight out of ten) of the results on the CSES with SLCS-R were negative and significant; all correlations of the CSES with ruminating about the self were significant and positive. In the case of ruminating about the social world, the correlations were lower and only significant in three cases. Finally, the correlations between self-liking and self-confidence, and between self-liking and ruminating about the self were negative and significant (*r*s respectively: −.59 and −.43). Those with ruminating about the social world were significant, but lower: *r*s: −.30 and −.24.

Results of the following mediation analyses are presented in Table 3.

Table 2. Correlations among results on the CSES and other variables

	N	CSES – Total	Vulnerability	Attractiveness	Opinions	Standards
Vulnerability	1,199	.75**				
Attractiveness	1,199	.75**	.36**			
Opinions	1,199	.80**	.43**	.55**		
Standards	1,199	.48**	.17**	.27**	.22**	
Neuroticism	194	.59**	.59**	.39**	.46**	.17*
Extraversion	194	.07	−.07	.19**	.13	−.02
Openness	194	−.14*	−.14	−.01	−.22**	.01
Agreeableness	194	.22**	.19**	.12	.23**	.07
Consciousness	194	−.17*	−.26**	−.11	−.18*	.18*
Self-liking	550	−.42**	−.55**	−.17**	−.28**	−.12**
Self-confidence	550	−.25**	−.34**	−.06	−.21**	.01
Ruminating – self	140	.44**	.48**	.23**	.30**	.25**
Ruminating – social world	140	.21*	.20*	.04	.27**	.01
Anxiety – trait	114	.31**	.43**	.20*	.19*	.00
Maladaptive perfectionism	152	.39**	.40**	.21**	.29**	.23**
Adaptive perfectionism	152	.11	−.05	.04	.07	.31**
Self-efficacy	114	−.20*	−.28**	−.09	−.26**	.28**
Temptations – Duties	124	.01	.16	−.02	−.11	.00
Temptations – Promotion	124	.15	.25**	.08	.03	.04
Temptations – Ego-strength	124	−.17	−.03	−.21*	−.17	−.09

* $p < .05$;   ** $p < .01$.

Table 3. Results of mediation analyses

Predictor	Mediator	Outcome variable	Effect	Sobel *t*	*p*
Self-liking	Ruminating about Self	CSES – Total	−.22	−2.87	.004*
		Vulnerability	−.02	−2.31	.021*
		Attractiveness	−.02	−1.89	.058
		Dependence	−.02	−1.94	.052
		Standards	−.02	−2.47	.013*
Self-competence	Ruminating about Self	CSES – Total	−.30	−3.65	<.001*
		Vulnerability	−.03	−3.65	<.001*
		Attractiveness	−.02	−2.44	.015*
		Dependence	−.02	−2.65	.008*
		Standards	−.02	−2.67	.008*
Self-liking	Ruminating about the social world	CSES – Total	−.03	−1.00	.318
		Vulnerability	.01	−.41	.679
		Attractiveness	.01	.08	.936
		Dependence	−.01	−1.98	.048*
		Standards	.01	.42	.677
Self-competence	Ruminating about the social world	CSES – Total	−.07	−1.53	.125
		Vulnerability	−.01	−1.31	.190
		Attractiveness	.01	−.35	.729
		Dependence	−.01	−1.98	.047*
		Standards	.01	.08	.939

* *p* < .05;   ** *p* < .01.

The pattern of results obtained was quite consistent with the hypothesis. Ten mediations were computed for general self-esteem as the predictor: CSE was the dependent variable and ruminating about oneself was the mediator. Eight were significant and the remaining two approached the conventional level of significance (*p*s: .052 and .058). In contrast, in the case of ruminating about the social world as the outcome variable, only two of the ten mediations were significant. Thus, the general hypothesis was confirmed: low general self-esteem causes rumination about oneself (but not about the environment), which in turn produces CSE.

Discussion

This paper presents research on the Polish version of the CSES, a tool for measuring CSE. Its internal consistency was .81 (or even .85 by McDonald's omega); this value is satisfactory and comparable to those reported in other similar research (Kernis, 2003; Neighbors et al., 2004; Patrick et al., 2004).

Factor structure of CSES
In the light of the factor analyses, the structure of the tool may not be unidimensional. Four factors were extracted and confirmed in the CFA: *vulnerability* (to negative opinions and rejection from others); *dependence on attractiveness*; *dependence on opinions*; and *dependence on self-standards*. The results suggesting that CSE may not be a unitary trait are congruent with most existing views and results (e.g. Crocker et al., 2003; Crocker & Knight, 2005; Schwinger, Schöne, & Otterpohl, 2015). In addition, they are in agreement with the view of Crocker and Knight (2005), who posit that everybody has contingencies as regards self-esteem, but these contingencies differ.

The obtained factor structure is strikingly consistent with the results of a similar research, presented by Schwinger et al. (2015). In Study 1, they performed an exploratory factor analysis on the German version of the CSES, and found four factors. The first one was other's approval, comprised by items emphasizing self-esteem to be dependent on other's people's judgements. It was almost identical to the first factor obtained in our study – three out of four items were identical to those reported by Schwinger et al. (2015). We preferred to call this factor *vulnerability*, that is, the inability to ignore negative opinions and rejection from others. The second factor was clearly identical in both studies (all three items present in both of them); Schwinger et al. called it appearance, while we preferred the name *dependence on attractiveness*. The

third factor was somewhat more problematic, both in the present study (called *dependence on opinions*) and in the analysis by Schwinger et al. 2015 (called the need for social support) – only one item was present in both studies in this factor. The fourth factor was again identical in both studies, and called *dependence on self-standards* in the present study, and self-competence in the study by Schwinger et al. (2015). While we preferred somewhat other terminology, the number of the factors and their content was remarkably similar in both studies. In sum, both studies confirm that the structure of CSE as measured by CSES is not unidimensional.

Moreover, when Schwinger et al. conducted a factor analysis on all items from the CSW and CSES simultaneously, the resulting factor structure resembled the original six-factor structure of the CSW. This means that the items comprising the CSES could be integrated into the factor structure of the CSWS. This further confirms that is better to distinguish among various areas of contingent self-esteem then to consider it to be unidemensional.

Validity of CSES and mediation analyses

In accordance with the predictions, neuroticism was positively related to the results on the scores on the CSES, although depending on standards yielded a substantially lower correlation magnitude. Extraversion was only related to depending on attractiveness, perhaps because some "showing off" related to extraversion may include appearance. Openness was negatively related to depending on opinions, which may mean that possessing an open mind makes a person indifferent to the opinions of others. Agreeableness was positively related to vulnerability to negative opinions and dependence on opinions, perhaps because seeking someone's approval assumes being nice and conciliatory to them. Finally, interesting results emerged in the case of conscientiousness: the general score on the CSES was negatively related to it, as was vulnerability to negative opinions, dependence on attractiveness and opinions. These negative correlations may be explained by the hypothesis that being conscientious and scrupulous requires concentrating on one's own standards, not on the opinions of others. This interpretation is supported by the fact that depending on one's own standards was *positively* correlated with conscientiousness. This is yet another sign that depending on one's own standards is not necessarily a facet of CSE.

In addition, in accordance with the hypothesis, CSE was negatively related to noncontingent self-esteem, operationalized as self-liking and self-competence (SLCS-R). Such negative correlation has been repeatedly found in existing research, as enumerated in Introduction. The present replication of these results is yet another confirmation that contingent and noncontingent self-esteem are separate phenomena. This also corroborates the view of Campbell et al. (1996) that high CSE *is* in a way a signal of low general self-esteem. However, it is worth noting that the size of the correlations was remarkably higher in the case of dependence on opinions and vulnerability than dependence on attractiveness and standards; the latter two

were not at all significantly related to self-competence. This may be a sign that depending on one's own physical attractiveness and trying to meet one's own standards are not the same as being dependent on the opinions of other people. In particular, depending on one's own standards may be a phenomenon that in our opinion is a candidate for exclusion from the scale measuring CSE. Meeting one's own healthy standards does not seem the same as constantly looking for approval from others.

Also in accordance with the hypotheses, CSE was positively correlated with ruminating. The correlations were higher in the case of ruminating about oneself than ruminating about the social world. This is understandable and congruent with the hypothesis: CSE is probably related to continual pondering about one's own quality. To some extent, it may also "make sense" for CSE to ruminate about the social world, especially if it does not provide the expected confirmations. However, CSE should be much more related to ruminating about oneself, which was the case in the present research.

The results of mediation analyses supported the hypothesis that general self-esteem affects CSE *via* the tendency to ruminate about oneself, but not about the social world. Still, in the latter case (ruminating about the social world) one of the dimensions of CSE achieved the level of significance: dependence on opinions. Given the fact that dependence on opinions is by definition related to being influenced by the opinions from the social environment, this may be understandable. It may be that low general self-esteem causes the tendency to ruminate about oneself, which may generalize to ruminating about the social world, which in turn increases the dependence of self-esteem on opinions from the social world.

Interestingly, this is not the first study to show that rumination may be a mediator in the mechanisms of CSE: Cambron and Acitelli (2010) found that rumination (as measured by a subscale from the Ruminative Response Scale; Treynor, Gonzalez, & Nolen-Hoeksema, 2003) acted as a mediator in the relationship between friendship contingent self-esteem and the depressive symptoms, measured by the Beck Depression Inventory-II (Beck, Steer, & Brown, 1996). They also found a positive correlation between CSE and rumination, as in the present study. This suggests that the relationship between CSE and rumination, postulated in the hypotheses in the present article may be stable across types of CSE and operationalizations of the tendency to ruminate. It indeed appears that people constantly seeking approval may indeed ruminate about the environment, wondering whether it provides the applause expected.

In sum, rumination seems to be a factor worth further investigation in the context of CSE as it might not only be a mediator of various relationships, but also a moderator. For example, Turner and White (2015) showed that rumination interacts with CSE (and gender) in predicting aggression: the highest level of aggression was present in a group of men who were high on anger rumination and CSE.

The results concerning maladaptive and adaptive perfectionism were clear-cut: all indices of CSE were

positively related to maladaptive perfectionism, while only one was significantly correlated with adaptive perfectionism. This is in line with the hypothesis stating that CSE is related to discrepancies between ideal self, ought self, and actual self, as is the case with maladaptive perfectionism. Depending on standards was the only facet of CSE that was correlated with adaptive perfectionism. This is understandable, as meeting one's standards and goals is simply a part of adaptive perfectionism. This is yet another argument that the CSES in its current form may include traits not necessarily directly related to CSE.

Contingent self-esteem was positively related to trait anxiety. This confirms the construct validity of the CSES as fragile self-esteem should be expected to generate anxiety constantly: in situations in which a person is not provided with the expected appreciation, admiral, and approval, he/she may experience anxiety. Strong negative emotions have already been shown to be related to CSE: Lakey et al. (2014) found it to be related to depression and suicidal tendencies.

The discriminant (divergent) validity was confirmed by the fact that results on the CSES did not correlate much with yielding to harmful temptations. The general score on the CSES did not correlate significantly at all with it. One of its subscales (vulnerability) was positively related to yielding to temptations related to promotion. Another subscale (dependence on attractiveness) was negatively related to the ego-strength factor, Both these correlations are difficult to explain. Still, only two out of fifteen correlations were significant, which in general confirms the discriminant validity of the CSES.

In the end, a comment about gender differences on CSES should be made. Women scored slightly higher on the scale than men did. This may be somewhat surprising considering that in most existing analyses and across cultures women tend to report lower self-esteem than men do (e.g. Bleidorn et al., 2016). This however applies to *general*, not contingent self-esteem. Given the negative correlation between general and contingent self-esteem, it is not surprising that the pattern of gender differences is reversed in the case of contingent self-esteem as compared to the general one. In fact, when gender differences on general self-esteem as measured by the SLCS-R were analyzed in the present sample, women indeed scored significantly lower than men did on both subscales. The topic of gender differences and their mechanisms in the context of contingent self-esteem is worth further investigation.

In sum, the CSES proved to be a useful and valid tool. In future research it may be used as a valid tool to assess self-esteem in a range of contexts, including clinical ones. The bottom line of the research may be that high self-esteem is not always beneficial, and that the structure of contingent self-esteem is definitely multidemensional.

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