

SOME EVIDENCE RELATING TO CONVERGENT VALIDITY OF FORM B OF COOPERSMITH'S SELF-ESTEEM INVENTORY

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Summary.—This study examined the convergent validity of the recently developed short form of Coopersmith's Self-esteem Inventory. The inventory and the Adjective Check List were administered to 172 male and 85 female university students. Correlations of scores on the inventory and the Adjective Check List scales for Self-confidence, Exhibition, and Change displayed a mixed pattern. All three ACL scales were significantly related to the inventory for males, but only the Exhibition scale was significantly related for females. In all instances, the correlations were low, or at best moderate. These findings were not interpreted as demonstrating *strong* support for the convergent validity of the inventory.

Although the construct of self-esteem has been the focus of abundant research, it continues to be plagued with ambiguities. No standard operational or theoretical definition of self-esteem is generally accepted (Crandall, 1973). Self-esteem clearly is a multidimensional concept; however, no definitive statement regarding its dimensionality exists (Wylie, 1968). Indicative of this confusion is the uncertainty that has surrounded the development and validation of instruments for the assessment of self-esteem. Validation in most instances has been attempted by illustrating a significant relationship between the instrument under consideration and another measure purported to represent one or more aspects of self-esteem. However, when the concept under investigation is ambiguous, as is self-esteem, any interpretation of results is at best conditional.

While much empirical support is available for the original Coopersmith (1967) Self-esteem Inventory, only a single unpublished study (cited in Crandall, 1973) provides data relating to the validity of its new shorter version (Form B, Self-esteem Institute, 1974). The evidence cited reported a significant correlation between the inventory and the self-acceptance aspect of self-esteem as measured by the Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale (1965). The purpose of the present study was to provide additional information pertaining to the convergent validity of the inventory.

The inventory and the Adjective Check List (Gough & Heilbrun, 1965) were administered to 172 male and 85 female subjects enrolled in an upper-level course at a major southeastern university. As noted by Crandall (1973), several indices relating to self-esteem can be obtained from the check list. Based on correlations with the Self-acceptance scale of the California Personality Inventory, the Self-confidence, Exhibition and Change scales of the check list are closest to self-esteem (Gough & Heilbrun, 1965). Although these three indices do not represent a central measure of self-esteem, it was believed that together they would provide an adequate basis for investigating the validity of the inventory.

Mean scores for the inventory and the Self-confidence, Exhibition and Change scales of the check list are given by sex in Table 1. In all cases, males scored higher than females. This difference, however, was significant only for the Exhibition scale ($t = 2.39$, $df = 255$, $p < .02$). Correlations between scores on the inventory and on each of the three

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TABLE 1
SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Self-esteem†	Adjective Check List Scales			M	SD
	Self-confidence	Exhibition	Change		
172 Males <i>r</i>	.44*	.32*	.19*	73.81	12.94
<i>M</i>	49.03	51.67	49.70		
<i>SD</i>	10.48	10.16	8.29		
85 Females <i>r</i>	.16	.29*	.17	71.91	13.24
<i>M</i>	47.47	48.47	48.15		
<i>SD</i>	9.53	9.85	8.98		

†Coopersmith Self-esteem Inventory—Form B.

* $p < .05$.

check list scales displayed a mixed pattern. Sex differences were evident on two of the three scales. For males, all relationships were significant ($p < .01$), although the associated correlations were moderate at best. For females, only the Exhibition scale possessed a significant ($p < .01$), although again moderate, correlation. The remaining two scales exhibited borderline significance ($p < .10$) and low correlations. Such data do not provide *strong* support for the convergent validity of the inventory. Rather, they seem further to underscore the ambiguities surrounding the definition and multidimensionality of the self-esteem construct. Potential users of "self" instruments are cautioned to define precisely the aspect of self-esteem they are interested in researching and carefully to select an instrument which has been demonstrated to measure the dimension.

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