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Authenticity Scale: Psychometric Evaluation of the Slovenian Version

Lestvica avtentičnosti: psihometrično ovrednotenje slovenske različice

Abstract: The aim of this study was to translate, adapt, and psychometrically evaluate the Authenticity Scale into the Slovenian language. This inventory was developed to measure a tripartite concept of authenticity, including self-alienation, authentic living, and accepting external influence. Authenticity is understood as an important factor in various areas of life, such as well-being and success in professional activities, such as psychotherapy and counselling. Its importance also extends to the fields of religion and spirituality. The Slovenian version of the Authenticity Scale was administered to a sample of 482 Slovenian-speaking adults. Exploratory factor (principal component) analysis, combined with parallel analysis, revealed a three-factor structure. This three-factor solution supports theoretically meaningful person-centred conceptualisation of authenticity (self-alienation, authentic living, and accepting external influence) and confirms the original solution in English. Reliability analysis shows good inter-item consistency (Cronbach alpha) coefficients for all subscales, as well as for the total scale (only the first question is somewhat problematic). Confirmatory factor analysis supports a three-factor solution and shows a good fit for the model. The results support the further use of the scale as a valid and reliable instrument for measuring the person-centred conceptualisation of authenticity in a Slovenian-speaking environment.

Keywords: The Authenticity Scale, authenticity, psychometric evaluation, Slovenian version

Povzetek: Cilj raziskave je bil prevesti Lestvico avtentičnosti v slovenščino, jo prirediti in psihometrično ovrednotiti. Lestvica je bila razvita za merjenje tripartitne konceptualizirane avtentičnosti, ki jo sestavlja odtujitev do sebe, avtentično življenje in sprejemanje zunanjega vpliva. Avtentičnost je razumljena kot pomemben dejavnik za različna življenjska področja, npr. dobro počutje, in uspeh v profesionalnih dejavnostih, kot sta psihoterapija in svetovanje. Pomembna pa je tudi za področje religije in duhovnosti. Slovenska verzija Lestvice avtentičnosti je bila

preverjena na vzorcu 482 slovensko govorečih odraslih. Eksploratorna faktorska analiza (z metodo glavnih osi ter oblimin rotacijo), kombinirana s paralelno analizo, je potrdila trifaktorsko strukturo. Ta rešitev s tremi faktorji podpira teoretično pomenljivo na osebo osredotočeno konceptualizacijo avtentičnosti (odtujitev od sebe, avtentično življenje in sprejemanje zunanjih vplivov), potrjuje pa tudi rešitev angleškega izvirnika. Analiza zanesljivosti je pokazala, da ima vprašalnik dobro notranjo skladnost, kar smo preverili s pomočjo koeficienta zanesljivosti Cronbach alfa – tako za vse podlestvice, kot tudi za celotno lestvico –, le prvo vprašanje je nekoliko problematično. Rezultati podpirajo nadaljnjo uporabo lestvice kot veljavnega in zanesljivega instrumenta za merjenje avtentičnosti v okviru na osebo osredotočene psihologije v slovenskem jezikovnem okolju.

Ključne besede: Lestvica avtentičnosti, avtentičnost, psihometrična evalvacija, slovenska različica vprašalnika

1. Introduction

Authenticity is a core concept in various humanistic and social sciences, including philosophy and psychology, and it is an important construct in humanistic psychology. According to the latter, authenticity consists of discrepancies between the true self, the perceived self, and the expressed self (Barnett and Deutsch 2015, 107). It refers to the activity of expressing one's true self, making deliberate choices and taking responsibility for them, all resulting in a sense of well-being and engagement in life. This definition of authenticity offers possibilities for differential behaviour across contexts, and behaviour only becomes inauthentic if the person experiences it as such (Sutton 2020, 1–2).

Authenticity is about being congruent with one's inner experience and presenting oneself honestly to others. According to Carl Rogers, one of the founders of humanistic psychology, and supported also by various empirical studies, authenticity (and genuineness and congruence as closely related constructs) is a key component of psychological well-being and growth (Rogers 1961, 156; Goldman and Kernis 2002, 18–20; Sutton 2020). When moving towards greater authenticity in psychotherapy, the person is able to come out from behind the masks, to drop the defence mechanisms and can be more openly the person he/she really is (Rogers 1961, 156). Sheldon et al. (2012, 1–2) are intrigued by the question of what is the self that the self is being true to, when the self is being true to itself, and question whether that means that the self can somehow lack access to itself (Sheldon et al. 2012, 1–2). Rogers (1961) claims that becoming authentic means to become more and more ourselves. A person seems to be trying to discover something more fundamental, something more real about themselves. The first to be laid aside are the masks which we are to some degree aware of using. This process of becoming authentic becomes even more difficult as a person begins to remove the false faces which were previously unknown and begins to explore the difficult feelings inside (Rogers, 1961, 250–251).

1.1 Dimensions of Authenticity

Researchers have attempted to identify various dimensions of authenticity. Wood et al. (2008) proposed that authenticity has three key dimensions:

- Self-alienation: feeling out of touch with one's true self.
- Authentic living: behaving consistently with one's inner experiences.
- Accepting external influence: the degree to which one conforms to the expectations of others.

It is important to note that authenticity is characterized by low self-alienation and low accepting external influence, not their presence.

According to multicomponent conceptualization (Kernis and Goldman 2006, 294–301), authenticity can be broken down into four separate, but interrelated components: awareness (knowledge of one's motives, feelings, desires and self-relevant cognitions), unbiased processing of self-relevant information (objectivity to one's positive and negative self-aspects, emotions and internal experiences etc.), behaviour (in accordance with one's values, preferences and needs) and relational orientation (valuing and striving for openness, sincerity and truthfulness in one's close relationships) (294–301). When individuals are able to fully accept and embrace their authentic selves without conditions or masks, they experience a sense of congruence and wholeness. Individuals can also experience varying degrees of authenticity across different contexts and relationships (Aday and Schmader 2019, 1). Schmader and Sedikides (2018, 228) introduced State Authenticity as Fit to the Environment (SAFE), a conceptual framework for understanding how social identities motivate the situations that people approach or avoid. The SAFE model suggests that various contexts subtly signal social identities in ways that imply each type of fit, resulting in state authenticity for advantaged groups but state inauthenticity for disadvantaged groups. With the predisposition that people strive to be authentic, these processes gradually lead to self-segregation among social groups, reinforcing social inequalities. The use of the term 'fit' refers specifically to features of the environment that match core aspects of the self. Authenticity is therefore fundamentally about how one's identity fits within a context (Schmader and Sedikides 2018, 229).

Authenticity can also be divided into three broad categories, as proposed by Newman and Smith (2016). Historical authenticity is assessed through an object's history and its association with a valued person, place or event. Categorical authenticity is sensitive to the extent to which an entity conforms to their existing beliefs about a particular category or type. Values authenticity is evaluation through an assessment of values, specifically the consistency between an entity's internal states and its external expressions (Newman 2019, 9–10). Higher authenticity and mindfulness relate to greater tendencies to engage self-relevant information in a relatively non-defensive manner (Lakey et al 2008, 1). Higher dispositional authenticity relates to many aspects of adaptive functioning, including

problem-focused coping strategies, mindfulness, positive role functioning, healthy aspects of self-concept structure, hedonic and eudaimonic well-being, authentic goal pursuits, low verbal defensiveness and also to higher couple satisfaction and functioning (Kernis and Goldman 2006, 344).

1.2 Authenticity in Context: Psychological, Social, and Spiritual Connections

Authenticity has been linked to other positive psychological outcomes, including higher life satisfaction, self-esteem, and aspects of both subjective and psychological well-being (Wood et al. 2008, 385; Sutton 2020, 11). For example, a study from 2019 (Womick et al. 2019) confirmed that individuals with a higher degree of authenticity experience more positive affects, a higher sense of meaning in life, and a higher level of life satisfaction; they are characterized by higher selfesteem and a higher level of well-being. This association with greater well-being is likely to be due to both its direct effects on well-being and its indirect buffering effects (Sutton 2020, 11). Higher authenticity, as expressed in lower incongruences between the three stages of authentic experience (true self, noticed self, and expressed self), is associated with benign humour styles (Barnett and Deutsch 2016, 107). Larger discrepancies in the self as well as the impact of external influences are associated with disparaging humour styles. This suggests that there is a relationship between individuals' experience of the self and their style of humour (107). Individuals with a higher level of authenticity are more likely to experience positive emotions and have better psychological adjustment; a higher level of authenticity has also been associated with stronger interpersonal relationships, as authentic self-expression facilitates intimacy and trust (Kernis and Goldman 2006, 344). The study by Tou et al. (2015) revealed that more authentic individuals more often engage in conflict strategies that emphasize solutions for both partners, rather than favouring the self (dominating strategy), others (obliging strategy), or neither (avoiding strategy). People who are relatively more authentic rarely use conflict strategies that have less focus on others. High levels of authenticity and compassionate goals and low levels of self-image goals are typically adaptive in relationships, but in the case of conflict, the relationships are more complex. While compassionate goals may motivate a person to oblige (sacrifice one's own needs), authenticity motivates an individual to favour the whole picture including both the needs of the self and the other (Tou et al. 2015, 193).

Another interesting aspect of authenticity is its connection with the so-called Dark Triad (Paulhus and Williams 2002) or Dark Tetrad (Paulhus 2014, 241). The characteristic of people with high levels of dark traits (narcissism, Machiavellianism, psychopathy, sadism) is the pursuit of personal goals over shared interests with other people, which is incompatible with socially sanctioned norms. This is supposed to affects subjective authenticity, traditionally defined as a natural tendency to perceive and present oneself as genuine (Bulbuc and Visu-Petra 2024, 1). Womick et al. (2019, 115–125) confirmed that individuals with a higher degree

of authenticity are characterized by lower levels of Machiavellianism, psychopathy, and direct sadism. In contrast to these three elements of the Dark Tetrad, individuals with a higher degree of authenticity are characterized by a slightly higher level of narcissism. This raises the question of how accurately narcissistic individuals assess their authenticity (or themselves in general). In addition, in the group with a weak expression of Dark Triad traits, the relationship between authenticity and positive measures (meaning in life, life satisfaction, experience of positive affects, self-esteem, well-being) is more strongly expressed than in the group with a strong expression of Dark Triad traits. The presence of dark traits reduces the strength of the relationship between authenticity and the measured positive measures. This research finding suggests that for those high on the Dark Tetrad, inauthenticity is less problematic for personal well-being. In the group with a low level of authenticity, the relationship between the expression of dark traits and all measured positive characteristics was even positive. This of course raises the question of how accurately people with a low level of authenticity assess their well-being and other positive characteristics. But authenticity may be an important moderator to consider in the relationship between Dark Tetrad traits and well-being (Womick et al 2019, 123). The darker types of authenticity reflect the inherent diversity, and the inadequate labelling of a genuine dark authentic self as inauthentic should be avoided (Bulbuc and Visu-Petra 2014, 8). Authenticity or 'to be that self which one truly is' is a path to well-being. However, among individuals with dark personalities, inauthenticity is not as harmful for personal well-being as it may provide a context in which such socially undesirable traits are associated with higher well-being.

Authenticity undeniably intersects with spiritual and religious dimensions, a connection that has been largely overlooked in empirical research. According to Christy et al. (2020, 133), religions uniquely emphasize transcendence, universalism, and ultimate questions about reality and the good, potentially exerting a more comprehensive influence on individuals' lives than other communities and serving as a potent source of experienced authenticity. The authors further argue that the relationship between religion and authenticity is complex, influenced by differences between specific religions, varying degrees of transcendent orientation, person-environment fit, and the interplay of situational-environmental factors, personal orientations, and social identities. For example, a recent study by Toper, Sellman, and Joseph (2023, 1) demonstrated that the positive correlations between authenticity and helping attitudes of altruism, as well as receiving and giving, were mediated by self-transcendence. Rogers (1980, 130) astutely observed that therapeutic and group experiences often encompass the transcendent, the ineffable, and the spiritual. Even he candidly admitted to having underestimated the significance of this spiritual facet, a sentiment likely shared by many in his field. The development of a measure for assessing authenticity in Slovene could help to fill this research gap and facilitate more comprehensive studies on the intricate relationship between authenticity, spirituality, and religious dimensions in diverse cultural contexts.

Authenticity has been studied in various contexts, including the workplace. Cultivating authenticity often involves self-awareness, self-acceptance, and the courage to express one's true thoughts, feelings, and beliefs. These are very important components of different psychotherapeutic approaches. The American Psychological Association's Guidelines on Evidence-Based Psychological Practice in Health Care (APA 2021) describe congruence and authenticity as one of the four important facets of the therapeutic relationship (the other three are empathy, goal consensus, and collaboration) that powerfully predict patient outcomes across treatment modalities (12). The issue of authenticity seems to be important for future research in psychology and psychotherapy; therefore, the measure for assessing authenticity for Slovene cultural contexts is of great interest. The Authenticity Scale (Wood et al. 2008) is currently one of the most known and used scales to assess authenticity as it is understood in person-centred conceptualization or model, defining authenticity as congruence between one's internal states, awareness, and expression.

2. Method

2.1 Participants

The sample for the study consisted of 482 volunteer participants, 67% were women and 38% men, with a mean age of 33.6 years and a standard deviation of 11.8, ranging from 18 to 71 years. All participants were residents of Slovenia who were proficient in the Slovene language.

Regarding marital status, 173 (44.7%) participants were in partnership but not married, 103 participants reported being married (26.6%), 95 (24.5%) participants were single, 11 (2.8%) were divorced, and 1 (0.3%) was widowed. 4 participants (1.0%) reported something else, and other didn't report their status.

Most participants (110, 28.5%) reported having a university degree, second Bologna degree, or equivalent, 100 (25.9%) had a first Bologna degree or equivalent, 108 (28%) had completed secondary school education, 36 (9.3%) had a specialisation or Master of Science degree, 8 (2.1%) had primary school education and 1 (0.3%) reported something else and others didn't report their education.

2.2 Measures

The Authenticity Scale (Wood, Linley, Maltby, Baliousis, and Joseph 2008) was used in the study. It is a self-report instrument designed to measure authenticity in individuals. Originally, the scale consists of 12 items, capturing three facets of authenticity: self-alienation, authentic living, and accepting external influence. Participants respond to each item using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from "does not describe me at all" to "describes me very well". This scale enables researchers to assess the degree to which individuals feel true to themselves versus feeling influenced by external pressures.

The three dimensions of the original English version of the AS are:

- *Self-alienation* - assessing the extent to which individuals feel out of touch with their true self.
- *Authentic living* - measuring how much individuals behave in accordance with their own values, desires, and beliefs.
- *Accepting external influence* - measuring the extent to which individuals conform to other people's expectations at the expense of their own values.

In the original validation study, factor analysis was utilized to confirm the three-factor structure of the scale, reflecting these dimensions (N=275). The Authenticity Scale has been used in several studies to examine the relationship between authenticity and psychological well-being, showing that higher scores on living authentically and lower scores on self-alienation and accepting external influences are associated with better mental health outcomes.

Grégoire, Baron, Ménard, and Lachance (2014, 346–355) adapted AS into the French language. Exploratory factor analysis of the French version resulted in a three-factor solution (60.15% of the variance explained), confirming the scale's original structure consisting of self-alienation, authentic living, and accepting external influence. This solution was confirmed with confirmatory factor analysis (Grégoire, Baron, Ménard, and Lachance 2014) consistent with the original scale, and demonstrated good reliability and stability.

2.3 Translation Process

The translation process into the Slovenian language mainly followed the standard translation process. Approval was obtained from the American Psychological Association (copyright holder) to translate and adapt the scale to the Slovene language. The English version of the AS was independently translated into the Slovenian language by three translators, who were proficient in both English and Slovenian language. The three versions were compared by the translators, and inconsistencies in their translations were discussed. A consensus was reached for all items. This version was pre-tested; it was used and analysed by students in a postgraduate course on research methods in marital and family studies at the University of Ljubljana. The students voluntarily administered it for testing through their social networks to 32 participants (ages ranged from 21 to 46). The data were used to show some basic psychometric analyses based on the collected data and to evaluate the understanding, comprehensibility, and suitability of the items. The scale was also checked by a Slovenian proof-reader. Based upon feedback, some minor aspects of the translated version were discussed by translators and researchers and were modified to best ensure that the questionnaire was well adapted for use within a Slovene cultural context. A native English-speaking translator, who had not seen the original English version, then translated the Slovenian version of the AS back into the English (back-translation). Translators and researchers compared the original version and the back-translated version about the similarity in language and meaning, ad no important differences were found. The translated version can be found in the Appendix.

2.4 Procedure

Once translated, the AS and a short demographic questionnaire were administered to volunteer participants recruited online through social networks using the online survey tool "1ka". The online data collection method has been criticised by some researchers, but there is strong empirical evidence suggesting that the results from these data are consistent with findings from traditional methods (Gosling et al. 2004, 93). The results were analysed using JAMOVI (version 2.4.14.0).

3. Results

3.1 Descriptive Statistics on Item Level

Means, standard deviations, kurtosis and skewness on the item level of the translated AS are presented in Table 1. The item means ranged from 2.95 to 6.12, kurtosis from -1.14 to 3.72 and skewness from -1.85 to 0.66.

AS Item	M	Md	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
1	6,12	7,00	1,24	-1,85	3,72
2	3,40	3,00	1,88	0,28	-1,14
3	3,92	4,00	1,71	-0,06	-1,02
4	3,34	3,00	1,62	0,24	-0,81
5	3,98	4,00	1,82	-0,06	-1,12
6	3,69	4,00	1,62	0,01	-0,93
7	2,95	2,00	1,77	0,65	-0,73
8	5,70	6,00	1,33	-1,14	1,14
9	5,56	6,00	1,29	-1,04	1,01
10	3,30	3,00	1,84	0,38	-1,01
11	5,78	6,00	1,13	-0,99	1,21
12	2,95	2,00	1,80	0,66	-0,68

Note. N=271. M – arithmetic mean. Md – median.

Table 1: *Descriptive statistics on item level for the Authenticity Scale.*

3.2 Principal Axis Exploratory Factor Analysis with Oblimin Rotation

An exploratory factor analysis with the principal axis method and oblimin rotation was computed. First, we checked the Kaiser Meyer-Olkin Measure of sampling adequacy, and the results showed that the sample was adequate (KMO=0.881). We also performed Bartlett's test of sphericity, and the test was significant ($\chi 2$ (482) = 2620, sig. < 0.001), indicating that nonzero correlations exist within the data set. Based on these good results, we proceed with calculating factor analysis. Direct oblimin (also used in the original scale) was used due to the theoretical assumption that the AS factors are correlated.

Regarding the rule for extraction since Kaiser Guttman criterion is described in the literature as somehow problematic (Hayton, Allen, and Scarpello 2004, 193), proposed parallel analysis (PA) (Hayton, Allen, and Scarpello 2004) was used to determine the number of factors to retain. The results of the PA showed that three factors should be retained. The results showed a three-factor solution accounting for 56.5% of the variance, factor 1 (indicating self-alienation) explaining 22.7% of the variance, factor 2 (indicating accepting external influence) explaining 19.6% of the variance and factor 3 (indicating authentic living) explaining 14.2%. Table 2 shows the factor loadings and communalities.

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Communalities
Item 1 AS			0.309	0.87
Item 2 AS	0.714			0.46
Item 3 AS		0.715		0.45
Item 4 AS		0.680		0.50
Item 5 AS		0.774		0.41
Item 6 AS		0.842		0.31
Item 7 AS	0.814			0.32
Item 8 AS			0.809	0.38
Item 9 AS			0.792	0.34
Item 10 AS	0.859			0.30
Item 11 AS			0.505	0.63
Item 12 AS	0.829		0.309	0.30

Note. AS – Authenticity Scale. Factor loadings 0.30 or higher are indicated.

Table 2: *Exploratory factor analysis with principal axis method results for Authenticity Scale: Oblimin factor loadings for three factors solution.*

The loadings of the AS items ranged from 0.309 to 0.859. The absolute loadings for the items of the self-alienation subscale factor ranged from 0.714 to 0.859, for the accepting external influence subscale factor from 0.680 to 0.842 and for the authentic living subscale factor from 0,309 to 0,809.

After the exploratory factor analysis, a confirmatory factor analysis using the maximum likelihood factor to test the goodness of fit was computed. As in the original version, the three-factor model was tested. These three factors were permitted to correlate in the calculations. Table 3 shows the standardised regression weights and model fit statistics for the model tested.

AS	Three-Factor Model		
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
Item 1 AS	---	---	0.358
Item 2 AS	0.739	---	---
Item 3 AS	---	0.756	---

Item 4 AS	---	0.708	---
Item 5 AS	---	0.753	---
Item 6 AS	---	0.833	---
Item 7 AS	0.826	---	---
Item 8 AS	---	---	0.771
Item 9 AS	---	---	0.825
Item 10 AS	0.839	---	---
Item 11 AS	---	---	0.587
Item 12 AS	0.840	---	---
Model fit indices	$\chi2$ = 98.2, df= 51, $\chi2$/df=1.925, p<0.001, CFI = 0.982, TLI = 0.976, RMSEA = 0.044		

Note. AS – Slovene version of Authenticity Scale. All factor loadings are significant at p<.001.

Table 3: *Standardised estimates of factor loading and model fit statistics - results of Confirmatory Factor Analytic Test for three-factor models.*

The results suggest that the proposed three-factor model is confirmed. Although the Chi-square is statistically significant ($\chi2$ = 98.2, df= 51, $\chi2$/df=1.925, p<0.001), other indices of model fit (the Root Mean Square Errors of Approximation [RMSEA] = 0.044; Comparative Fit Indexes [CFI] = 0.982; Tucker-Lewis Index [TLI] = 0.976) indicate good fit and they indicate that the model finds support. They comply with the criteria for good fit (López, Jódar, and MacDonald 2017, 1115); the CFI is high above the criterion (0.90 and above (Holmes-Smith 2011)), the RMSEA is below 0.08, even below 0.05 (lower values indicate better fit, 0.08 is generally viewed as providing evidence of adequate fit, for a detailed discussion see Byrne (2010, 80-81)). The Tucker-Lewis Index produces a value high above 0.90 and also indicating a good fit.

The standardized factor covariance estimates between the three factors are moderate, namely between self-alienation and accepting external influence is 0.601, between the self-alienation subscale and the authentic living subscale is -0.447 and between the accepting external influence subscale and the authentic living subscale is -0.503.

3.3 Descriptive and Reliability Statistics of Si-RES

Means, standard deviations, minimums, maximums, and Cronbach alpha reliability coefficients for both three subscales (along with the total scale) of AS were calculated and presented in Table 4. All Cronbach alpha coefficients reflect good reliability, only the self-alienation subscale has a slightly lower (0.725) reliability due to the first question.

	M	Md	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	Min.	Max.	Cronbach Alpha
AS Self-alienation	12.6	12.00	6.28	0.426	-0.743	4.00	28.00	0.884
AS Accepting external influence	14.9	15.00	5.60	0.0649	-0.749	4.00	28.00	0.846

AS Authentic living	23.2	24.00	3.70	-0.853	.479	10.00	28.00	0.725
AS	59.6	60.00	12.5	-0.335	-0.427	23	84	0.876

Note. N=482. M – arithmetic mean. Md – median. Min. – minimum. Max. – maximum. AS - Authenticity scale.

Table 4: *Descriptive and Reliability Statistics for the AS subscales and AS total score.*

4. Discussion

There is a lack of measures of authenticity in Slovenia. In fact, we do not know of any that have been translated, adapted, and psychometrically evaluated to be used for research and other purposes. Therefore, our study evaluated one such scale: the Slovenian version of The Authenticity Scale (Wood, Linley, Maltby, Baliousis and Joseph 2008), a self-report instrument designed to measure authenticity in individuals.

Descriptive statistics at the item level revealed some interesting patterns. The item means ranged from 2.95 to 6.12, indicating that Slovenian respondents generally endorsed authenticity-related statements positively. However, the variability of the responses (as indicated by the standard deviations and the range of skewness and kurtosis values) suggests that the scale effectively captures individual differences in authenticity within the Slovenian population.

The item with the highest mean (6.12) was from the authentic living subscale, suggesting that Slovenian participants strongly endorse the importance of being true to oneself. Conversely, items from the self-alienation subscale had lower means, suggesting that on average, participants did not strongly identify with feelings of disconnection from their true selves. These patterns are consistent with the theoretical underpinnings of authenticity as a positive psychological construct associated with well-being.

The results of our study provide support for the psychometric properties of our adaptation of the Authenticity Scale. We found good reliability (Cronbach's alpha) for the self-alienation (0.884) and accepting external influence (0.846) subscales, as well as for the overall scale (0.876). Only the authentic living subscale has a slightly lower Cronbach's alpha reliability, but it is still acceptable (0.725). The measures of reliability and also other psychometric characteristics (e.g., arithmetic means of dimensions) are mainly consistent (reliability coefficients are even slightly greater, except of the mentioned authentic living subscale) with published research of the Authenticity scale. Namely Wood et al. reported Cronbach alpha from 0,77 to 0,81 for original English version and Grégoire et al. reported Cronbach alpha from 0,73 to 0,78 for the Franch version (Grégoire, Baron, Ménard, and Lachance 2014, 350).

The slightly lower reliability is mainly due to the first question ("I think it is better to be yourself than to be popular"), to which 51.2% (Md=7) of respondents gave the highest possible level of agreement. In the Slovenian context, the trade-off between

being oneself and being popular may be viewed slightly differently than in the original English-speaking sample (Wood, Linley, Maltby, Baliousis, & Joseph 2008). This may reflect cultural differences in individualism versus collectivism, or in the social desirability of authenticity versus conformity. It could also reflect some changes in society in general, since more than 15 years have passed since the original study. Future research could explore these potential cultural differences in more depth, perhaps using qualitative methods or cross-cultural comparative studies.

Exploratory factor analysis revealed a three-factor structure, consistent with the original scale developed by Wood et al. (2008). This structure, comprising self-alienation, authentic living, and accepting external influence, accounted for 56.5% of the total variance. This finding suggests that the conceptualization of authenticity as a multidimensional construct translates well across cultural boundaries, from the original English-speaking context to the Slovenian one. It's noteworthy that the factor loadings for most items were strong, ranging from 0.680 to 0.859 for self-alienation and accepting external influence. However, the authentic living subscale showed more variability in factor loadings (0.309 to 0.809). This pattern suggests that while the concepts of self-alienation and external influence translate quite uniformly to the Slovenian context, the notion of authentic living may have some cultural nuances that warrant further investigation.

Confirmatory factor analysis further supported this three-factor model, with good fit indices (CFI = 0.982, TLI = 0.976, RMSEA = 0.044). These results align closely with those reported in the original validation study and subsequent adaptations, such as the French version by Grégoire et al. (2014). This consistency across different cultural adaptations lends credence to the robustness of the Authenticity scale's underlying theoretical model and its cross-cultural applicability.

The moderate correlations between the three factors (ranging from -0.447 to 0.601) suggest that while these aspects of authenticity are related, they are also distinct constructs in the Slovenian context. This supports the multidimensional conceptualization of authenticity and indicates that Slovenian individuals may experience varying levels of authenticity across these different domains.

The validation of the Slovenian Authenticity Scale opens up many possibilities for research and practice in psychology, psychotherapy, religion, spirituality and related fields within Slovenia. Researchers can use this tool to explore the relationships between authenticity and various psychological outcomes in the Slovenian population. For instance, given the established links between authenticity and well-being in other cultures (Wood et al. 2008; Sutton 2020), future studies could investigate whether similar associations exist in Slovenia, and if there are any unique cultural moderators of these relationships.

While this study provides strong initial support for the Slovenian version of the Authenticity Scale, several limitations should be addressed in future research. First, the sample, while diverse in age and education, was predominantly female (67%). Future studies should aim for a more balanced gender representation to ensure the scale's applicability across genders in Slovenia. Secondly, test-retest reliability

was not assessed in this study. Future research should examine the temporal stability of the Slovenian version of the Authenticity Scale to further establish its psychometric properties. In addition, convergent and discriminant validity could be explored by examining correlations with related constructs such as well-being, self-esteem, and personality traits in the Slovenian population. Furthermore, given the increasing interest in authenticity across different life domains, future research could explore how the Slovenian version performs in specific contexts, such as work, relationships, or online environments. This could lead to the development of domain-specific adaptations of the scale, tailored to the unique challenges and manifestations of authenticity in these areas within Slovenian society.

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Appendix

THE SLOVENE-LANGUAGE VERSION OF THE AUTHENTICITY SCALE (AS):

1. Menim, da je bolje biti to, kar si, kot biti popularen.
2. Ne vem, kako se v sebi zares počutim.
3. Mnenja drugih močno vplivajo name.
4. Običajno naredim, kar mi drugi rečejo, naj naredim.
5. Vedno imam občutek, da moram narediti to, kar drugi pričakujejo od mene.
6. Drugi ljudje močno vplivajo name.
7. Občutek imam, da se ne poznam zelo dobro.
8. Vedno stojim za tistim, v kar verjamem.
9. V večini situacij sem zvest/-a sami/samemu sebi.
10. Čutim, da nisem v stiku s svojim »pravim jazom«.
11. Živim v skladu s svojimi vrednotami in prepričanji.
12. Počutim se odtujen/-a od same/-ga sebe.