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*Polish Adaptation of the Personal and General Belief  
in a Just World Scales*

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Polska adaptacja Skali Personalnej i Ogólnej Wiary w Sprawiedliwy Świat

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ABSTRACT

The article presents the adaptation process and psychometric properties of the Polish version of the Belief in a Just World Scale (BJW) developed by Dalbert. The BJW Scale contains two subscales: Personal Belief in a Just World (PBJW) and General Belief in a Just World (GBJW). The survey was conducted in four samples (N = 579) among students, workers, mothers of disabled children and the adolescent. The convergent and divergent validity was assessed on the basis of the correlation between the PBJW and the GBJW with the scale of rumination about the self and the rumination about the social world (Rumination Questionnaire), the personality traits of the Big Five Model (Ten Item Personality Inventory) and the sense of safety (Safety Experience Questionnaire). The reliability (Cronbach's alpha coefficient  $\alpha$ ) of the PBJW was 0.92 and the GBJW was 0.84 in the sample of adults. The two-factor structure of the BJW Scale was confirmed. The parameters of model fit took the next values: RMSEA (0.035; 90% CI: 0.022; 0.048), GFI (0.990), CFI (0.994), TLI (0.992), SRMR (0.055) and  $\chi^2/df$  (1.59). The results indicate that the Polish version of the BJW Scale is valid and reliable and has very good psychometric properties. The study has shown that Polish respondents slightly tend to agree that the world is fair on them (mean of PBJW is 3.77; SD = 0.94), but they slightly disagree that it is fair in general (mean of GBJW is 3.10; SD = 0.95). In order to make appropriate hypotheses about the functional role of BJW for the unit, it was recommended to examine both the PBJW and the GBJW at the same time, as well as the relationship between these forms of BJW.

**Keywords:** belief in a just world; scale; psychometric properties; adaptation process

## BELIEF IN A JUST WORLD

The entire history of human life in the world is permeated by the idea of justice, which regulates human relations in almost all areas of life (Nartova-Bochaver, Astanina, 2014). With Lerner's introduction of the concept of "Belief in a Just World" to psychology, psychologists began to conduct intensive research on justice, especially in the context of social behaviour (Lerner, 1980). Belief in a just world is the idea that an individual believes that the world is just and everyone in life gets what they deserve and deserves what they get (Lerner, 1980). Despite the fact that in culture, religion or human history the presence of injustice in the world has been pointed out, people are not willing to give up their faith in a just world. Believing in the world's justice is a cognitive delusion, but it has an adaptive meaning for a man because it allows him to perceive life as safe and structured. Therefore, belief in a just world can be seen as a human need, a lack of satisfaction of which can be traumatic and cause existential shock.

Not only is a man an observer of just and unjust phenomena in the world, which he interprets and judges, but also acts as a participant in it. Since these life phenomena directly affect a man, researchers (Lipkus, Dalbert, Siegler, 1996) distinguish, in addition to general belief in the just world (GBJW), another form of a belief – a personal belief in the just world (PBJW). The GBJW reflects the belief that the world is a just place where everyone gets what they deserve. The PBJW reflects the belief that an individual is treated fairly in their life. GBJW is expressed in the question: Is the world fair?, and PBJW: Am I treated fairly in my life? GBJW is a broad concept and is characterised by a too generalised and imperceptible character. The GBJW reflects a set of beliefs about reality, which may be consciously or unconsciously developed, influenced by upbringing during childhood or accepted as a stereotypical template existing in society, culture and state history (Skrzypińska, 2003). The phenomenological meaning of PBJW for an individual is much more personally significant than that of GBJW.

## THE TWO FORMS OF BELIEF IN A JUST WORLD

The PBJW contains not only a collection of an individual's beliefs about the world's justice towards them, but also a cognitive-emotional evaluation of the "individual-world" relationship, which is a subject to analysis when the individual experiences just or unjust life situations. On the basis of the analysis of the relationship between PBJW and GBJW, different life attitudes may be presented. Nartova-Bochaver, Hohlova and Podlipnyak (2013) concluded that an individual's antisocial attitudes may lead to the belief that the world is a just place, but where they do not feel it being fair to them. In turn, a weak belief in justice in all dimensions of BJW can result in reduced well-being, depressive symptoms and a feeling

of being a victim. Describing an attitude characterised by a belief in an unjust world, but in which there is hope that the individual will be treated righteously, Nartova-Bochaver et al. (2013) referred to Schopenhauer, who believed that “the world is hell”, but everyone can find a fireproof asylum for themselves in it. Such an attitude in life can be considered realistic and positive for an individual who, by means of altruistic actions, seeks to restore humanity in life.

The presented examples show the phenomenological differences between the two dimensions of BJW, which is also reflected in the role played by the two forms of BJW in the psychosocial functioning of the individual.

### PERSONAL BELIEF IN A JUST WORLD

In a meta-analysis of BJW relationships with personality traits in the Big Five Model, the presence of negative P/GBJW relationships with neuroticism and positive relationships with extraversion and agreeableness, a positive PBJW relationship with conscientiousness and a lack of P/GBJW relationships with openness to experience was noted (Nudelman, 2013). A broad overview of research on the role of PBJW was presented by Bartholomaeus and Strelan (2019), who conclude that PBJW is related to emotional well-being and adaptive coping in difficult life situations. PBJW is a protective factor against mental and physical illnesses (Bartholomaeus, Strelan, 2019). It has been found that students who strongly believe that the world is fair to them feel more happiness, are optimistic and are more satisfied with life (Yasien, 2015). A relation between PBJW and good subjective well-being and low intensity of negative emotions was also observed (Nartova-Bochaver, Donat, Rüprich, 2019). The prosocial role of PBJW was demonstrated, which is expressed in altruistic acts, donations to charity, etc. (Bartholomaeus, Strelan, 2019). In the workplace psychology, PBJW can be considered in the context of organisational justice. It has been noted that PBJW (but not GBJW) has to do with the sense of well-being at work, which, in turn, can contribute to a greater job satisfaction (Johnston, Krings, Maggiori, Meier, Fiori, 2016). The role of P/GPJW was also considered in the psychology of interpersonal relationships, including intimate relationships (Rovenská, Dadul'áková, 2018).

In contemporary research, scientists focus on the search for mechanisms by which the beneficial role of PBJW for personality can be explained (Furnham, 2003). In a sample of Russian students, it was found out that mental resilience played a mediating role in the relationship between PBJW and psychological well-being and positive affect. It was also noted that the relationship between PBJW and mental well-being is mediated by self-esteem (Nartova-Bochaver et al., 2019). PBJW is positively linked to self-efficacy, achievement and self-discipline, and the relationship is mediated by an inner sense of locus of control (Nudelman, Otto, 2019). The Polish authors Przepiórka and Błachnio (2016) noted that PBJW

is negatively associated with feelings of envy and malicious joy, i.e. the joy of someone else's misfortune.

The researchers conclude that beliefs about justice are important not only for adults but also for children. Thus, it has been noted that students with a strong belief in the world's justice towards them (PBJW) have a positive attitude towards school, a high academic self-esteem, and greater satisfaction with school. It was also noted that among pupils PBJW is a protective factor against somatisation (Donat, Peter, Dalbert, Kamble, 2016). It was noted that an increase in the level of P/GBJW, especially PBJW, is related to the decrease of aggression in both groups of Belarusian and Ukrainian teenagers (Larionov, Ageenkova, Smeyan, 2021). Thus, for both adults and children, PBJW is an individual's resource and is associated with good psychological functioning (Donat, Umlauft, Dalbert, Kamble, 2012; Bartholomaeus, Strelan, 2019; Nartova-Bochaver et al., 2019). It should be noted that according to Nartova-Bochaver, Donat, Astanina and Rüprich (2018), the research shows mixed results for gender differences in the level of PBJW and GBJW in various cultures.

In conclusion, an individual with a strong belief that the world is fair to them, is adaptable, copes with problems well, has a positive attitude towards the world, experiences fewer psychological problems and is characterised by social interest.

### GENERAL BELIEF IN A JUST WORLD

It should be emphasised that in the majority of psychological studies the role of PBJW was rather considered from the intrapersonal position, while the role of GBJW was more often considered from the interpersonal position. It can be observed that conclusions concerning PBJW are consistent and reflect the positive role of PBJW. However, GBJW conclusions are not entirely clear (Nartova-Bochaver, Astanina, 2014). The adaptive and maladaptive potential of GBJW is emphasised. From the intrapersonal position, the adaptive importance of the GBJW has been noted, which is positively related to resilience (Wu et al., 2010). GBJW, through the development of optimism and gratitude, positively influences mental well-being and is a protective factor against depression (Jiang, Yue, Lu, Yu, Zhu, 2015). However, it is worth stressing that these effects are more characteristic of collective than individual cultures (Nartova-Bochaver, Astanina, 2014). From an interpersonal point of view, it can be noted that GBJW is associated with unfair behaviour (Wenzel, Schindler, Reinhard, 2017), discrimination of the elderly, stigmatisation of poverty and the choice of higher penalties for crimes (Bègue, Bastounis, 2003). It was also found that GBJW is positively associated with the feeling of malicious joy (Przepiórka, Błachnio, 2016).

To sum up, the role of GBJW is ambiguous and is associated with both positive and negative aspects of human life. It is, therefore, possible that in order to understand the system of relations between an individual and the surrounding reality, it

is necessary to study both PBJW and GBJW at the same time. It was found that people suffering from depression perceive the world as unfair to them, but they are at the same time convinced that the world is fair in general. There was no such gap between PBJW and GBJW among people without depression (Uğur, Akgün, 2015). This underlines that the study of the relationship between the PBJW and the GBJW allows for an adequate understanding of the role of the forms of BJW in an individual's psychosocial functioning. From this point of view, a separate study of the level of PBJW or GBJW becomes less meaningful and does not fully allow for valuable hypotheses about the functional role of belief in a just world for the individual.

## MEASURES OF PERSONAL AND GENERAL BELIEF IN A JUST WORLD

One of the best-known tools of investigating both PBJW and GBJW levels is the Belief in a Just World (BJW) Scale, which contains two separate subscales: the Personal Belief in a Just World Scale and the General Belief in a Just World Scale. In 1987, the GBJW Scale was developed in Germany by Dalbert, Montada and Schmitt (1987). Thus, in 1999, in a publication in English, Dalbert (1999) presented the PBJW Scale and at the same time indicated the possibility of merging the GBJW and PBJW Scales into one BJW Scale. At present, it is possible to use these two separate PBJW and GBJW Scales or a combined BJW Scale for scientific research. The BJW Scale consists of 13 questions: 7 questions refer to the PBJW Scale and 6 questions refer to the GBJW Scale. During the construction of these scales Dalbert (1999) used a 6-point response scale.

The BJW Scales have been broadly used worldwide and have been translated into Chinese (Wu et al., 2010), urdu (Fatima, Khalid, 2007), Portuguese (Modesto, Figueredo, Gama, Rodrigues, Pilati, 2017; Gouveia et al., 2018), Russian (Nartova-Bochaver, Donat, Astanina, Rüprich, 2018), Latvian (Nesterova, Ignatjeva, Ruza, 2015), Hungarian (Dalbert, Katona-Sallay, 1996), Spanish in Argentina (Barreiro, Etchezahar, Prado-Gascó, 2018) and others.

## PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

Due to the growing interest in the problems of justice in almost all fields of psychology and related sciences in the world, this study aims to develop the Polish version of the Belief in a Just World Scale by Dalbert (1999) and present its psychometric features.

## HYPOTHESES

H1. PBJW and GBJW are separate but interrelated constructs that show different correlation patterns to various psychological variables.

- H2. Based on data that rumination about the social world is associated with complaining about the world and believing in its injustice (Baryła, Wojciszke, 2005), a negative correlation between GBJW and rumination about the social world is assumed. As PBJW is positively associated with a sense of well-being (Nartova-Bochaver et al., 2019) and rumination about self is associated with lower self-esteem, mood and satisfaction with life (Baryła, Wojciszke, 2005), a negative correlation between PBJW and rumination about self is expected.
- H3. It was found that GBJW was positively associated with such values as conformity and security (Wolfradt, Dalbert, 2003). It is assumed that P/GBJW correlate positively with sense of safety.
- H4. Based on meta-analysis by Nudelman (2013), it is assumed that P/GBJW correlate negatively with neuroticism and positively with extraversion and agreeableness. It is also expected that PBJW positively correlate with conscientiousness. P/GBJW are unrelated to openness to experience.

## METHOD

At the first stage of adaptation, the original version of the scale was translated into Polish. In the second stage, the linguistic equivalence of the tool was checked. At the third stage, the scale structure was evaluated by means of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). At the fourth stage, the reliability of the scale was assessed. At the fifth stage, the convergent and divergent validity was assessed.

Statistical analysis was carried out using Statistica 13.3 and the *lavaan* statistical package in the R software environment.

The original version of the BJW Scale has been translated into Polish by three translators. The translations were consistent and on their basis a common Polish version of the BJW Scale was established. Then the Polish version of the scale was translated into English by a translator who was not familiar with the original version of the scale. This translated questionnaire was sent to M. Donat, who as a German specialist in justice psychology and an associate of the author of Dalbert's BJW Scale, participated in the validation work of the Russian version of the scale (Nartova-Bochaver et al., 2018), checked the linguistic equivalence of the tool. The meaning of the Polish statements and the original version of the scale were found to be consistent. It was concluded that the Polish version of the BJW Scale was correct and subjected to further adaptation procedures.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EXAMINED GROUPS

The validation study was carried out in four samples with a total of 579 people. The survey was conducted online (samples I, II and III), while the adolescent survey was conducted using a pencil-and-paper method. The sample of students, workers and

mothers of disabled children was collected by posting a link to the study in groups on Facebook. Participation in the survey was anonymous and voluntary. The study among adolescents was carried out in one of the primary schools in the Greater Poland region. The sample consisted of 74 people (39 girls and 34 boys, one participant did not indicate the gender). They were aged between 11 and 15. Sociodemographic characteristics of the studied groups and the aim of the survey are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics of the examined groups

Sample	N (% of women)	Participants	Age		Aim of the study
			M	SD	
I	216 (77.78)	Students and workers	25.06	8.87	Assessment of the convergent and divergent validity, reliability analysis
II	257 (84.05)	Workers	31.92	11.73	Reliability analysis
III	32 (100)	Mothers of disabled children	39.03	8.49	Evaluation of the theoretical validity using an external criterion, reliability analysis
IV	74 (52.70)	Adolescents	12.57	1.01	Reliability analysis
Total of samples I + II	473 (81.18)	Students and workers	28.79	11.06	Assessment of scale factor structure, reliability analysis
Total of samples I + II + III	505 (82.38)	Students and workers, mothers of disabled children	29.44	11.19	Reliability analysis

M – mean; SD – standard deviation

Source: Authors' own elaboration.

## RESEARCH TOOLS

The validated Polish version of the BJW Scale consists of 13 items. The first 7 items refer to the Personal Belief in a Just World Scale and the next 6 items refer to the General Belief in a Just World Scale. The scale of answers is 6-points: from 1 (I strongly disagree) to 6 (I strongly agree).

The Rumination Questionnaire (RQ) developed by Baryła and Wojciszke (2005) allows to assess the frequency of recurrence of negative thoughts about oneself and the social world. The RQ contains two scales: the scale of Rumination about Self (I think about events from the past, whose course I would like to change) and the scale of Rumination about the Social World (It hurts that so many wicked people are never punished). Each of these scales contains 10 questions. The scale of answers is 5-point: from 1 (never) to 5 (very often). The analysis of the reliability of the RQ indicates satisfactory internal consistency: Cronbach's alpha for

the Rumination about Self scale is 0.89, and for the Rumination about the Social World scale is 0.88 (Baryła, Wojciszke, 2005).

The Safety Experience Questionnaire (SEQ) developed by Klamut (2019) is used to examine the level of sense of safety and reflected on safety. The questionnaire consists of 9 questions and contains two scales: Sense of Safety (I experience the possibility of realising the value of safety) and Reflection (I value the safety of my relatives). The Sense of Safety scale contains 5 questions, and the Reflection scale is 4. The scale of answers is 5-point: from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). According to Klamut (2019), the reliability of SEQ is high for the Sense of Safety scale (Cronbach's alpha is 0.85), but slightly lower for the Reflection scale (Cronbach's alpha is 0.68).

The Polish version of the Ten Item Personality Inventory (TIPI-PL) is used to assess personality traits in the Big Five Model (Sorokowska, Słowińska, Zbieg, Sorokowski, 2014). The scale consists of 5 subscales: extraversion (I consider myself to be a person who likes the company of others, active and optimistic), agreeableness (consensual, kind), conscientiousness (conscientious, disciplined), emotional stability (not worried, emotionally stable) and openness to experience (open to new experiences, in a complex way perceiving the world). Each of these subscales contains 2 questions, one of which is reversed. TIPI-PL is characterised by relatively good psychometric properties. In the TIPI-PL validation studies conducted in the Google Forms, Cronbach's alpha coefficients for extraversion, conscientiousness, and emotional stability were 0.74, 0.80 and 0.83, respectively, and for the subscale, agreeableness 0.54 and openness to experience 0.45 (Sorokowska et al., 2014).

## RESULTS

### 1. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Table 2 presents descriptive statistics for individual items of the BJW Scale. As the skewness and kurtosis of all items did not exceed the range from  $-1$  to  $+1$  (Bedyńska, Książek, 2012), their distributions can be considered approximately normal.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of BJW Scale items (samples I + II; total N = 473)

Items	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
PB JW				
I believe that, by and large, I deserve what happens to me	3.76	1.23	-0.43	-0.46
I am usually treated fairly	3.76	1.15	-0.40	-0.56
I believe that I usually get what I deserve	3.83	1.16	-0.49	-0.37
Overall, events in my life are just	3.67	1.14	-0.23	-0.52
In my life injustice is the exception rather than the rule	3.74	1.25	-0.31	-0.75

Items	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
I believe that most of the things that happen in my life are fair	3.79	1.13	-0.45	-0.51
I think that important decisions that are made concerning me are usually just	3.85	1.07	-0.46	-0.33
Overall result of the PBJW	26.40	6.58	-0.38	-0.17
Average total score of the PBJW	3.77	0.94	-0.38	-0.17
GBJW				
I think basically the world is a just place	2.53	1.25	0.63	-0.42
I believe that, by and large, people get what they deserve	3.12	1.24	0.17	-0.76
I am confident that justice always prevails over injustice	2.99	1.35	0.37	-0.73
I am convinced that in the long run people will be compensated for injustices	3.48	1.37	-0.08	-0.97
I firmly believe that injustices in all areas of life (e.g., professional, family, politic) are the exception rather than the rule	3.03	1.22	0.27	-0.60
I think people try to be fair when making important decisions	3.47	1.14	-0.24	-0.73
Overall result of the GBJW	18.62	5.70	0.24	-0.39
Average total score of the GBJW	3.10	0.95	0.24	-0.39

M – mean; SD – standard deviation

Source: Authors' own elaboration.

In the samples of adults (I + II) the average score of PBJW is 3.77 (SD = 0.94), while the average score of GBJW is 3.10 (SD = 0.95). In sample I (N = 216), PBJW and GBJW intensity in men (N = 48) and women (N = 168) was analysed. Men had a lower level of GBJW (U = 3146; Z = -2.32; p = 0.02). No differences in level of PBJW were found.

In the sample of adolescents the average total score of PBJW is 3.41 (SD = 0.82) and the average total score of GBJW is 3.47 (SD = 1.05). There were no gender differences in PBJW and GBJW.

## 2. ANALYSIS OF FACTOR STRUCTURE OF THE BJW SCALE

The factor structure of the BJW Scale was verified by Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) using the *lavaan* statistical package in the R software environment of a sample of 473 individuals (total of samples I + II). The multivariate kurtosis coefficient (60.09) and its critical ratio (33.09) were calculated, which showed that the conditions were not met in relation to the expected multivariate normal distribution of variables. Therefore, a diagonally weighted least squares (DWLS)

estimator was used. The model fit was estimated on the basis of measures: RMSEA, GFI, CFI, TLI, SRMR and  $\chi^2/df$ .

According to the theoretical model of the scale and its two-factor structure, a covariance between factors was introduced. The model fit parameters reached values indicating very good fit of the model: RMSEA (0.035; 90% CI: 0.022; 0.048), GFI (0.990), CFI (0.994), TLI (0.992), SRMR (0.055) and  $\chi^2/df$  (101.865/64 = 1.59).

The values of standardised factor loadings took values from 0.572 to 0.901 (all  $p < 0.001$ ). The value of correlation between PBJW and GBJW factors was equal to 0.602 and comparable to the value obtained in the Russian version of the scale 0.58 (Nartova-Bochaver et al., 2018) and in the Portuguese version adapted in Brazil – 0.63 (Gouveia et al., 2018). To sum up, the factor structure of the Polish version of the B JW Scale has been confirmed.

### 3. ANALYSIS OF SCALE RELIABILITY

The reliability of the scale was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient ( $\alpha$ ) and McDonald's omega coefficient ( $\omega$ ), which were calculated in six different samples (see table 3). For PBJW, the  $\alpha$  and  $\omega$  values are above 0.90 for all samples of adults, while for GBJW they are slightly lower ( $\alpha = 0.85$  and  $\omega = 0.84$ ).

In the sample of adolescents for PBJW the  $\alpha$  and  $\omega$  values are 0.72 and 0.73 respectively. The reliability of the GBJW scale is high ( $\alpha = 0.84$  and  $\omega = 0.84$ ).

Table 3. Internal consistency coefficients  $\alpha$  and  $\omega$  for different samples

Sample	PBJW		GBJW	
	$\alpha$	$\omega$	$\alpha$	$\omega$
I (N = 216; students and workers)	0.92	0.92	0.93	0.84
II (N = 257; workers)	0.91	0.91	0.85	0.86
III (N = 32; mothers of disabled children)	0.90	0.90	0.87	0.87
IV (N = 74; adolescents)	0.72	0.73	0.84	0.84
Total of samples I + II (N = 473)	0.91	0.91	0.85	0.85
Total of samples I + II + III (N = 505)	0.92	0.92	0.85	0.85

Source: Authors' own elaboration.

### 4. ANALYSIS OF SCALE VALIDITY

The convergent and divergent validity of the scale was carried out in sample I (N = 216; students and workers) and was assessed on the basis of the relationship between PBJW and GBJW with the rumination about self and the social world (the Rumination Questionnaire was used), personality traits in the Big Five Model (Ten

Item Personality Inventory) and with a sense of safety and reflection on security (Safety Experience Questionnaire). Cronbach's alpha coefficient values for all variables in the analysed sample were calculated (see table 4). Only the reliability of measurement of the variables "openness to experience" and "reflection on safety" was too low, therefore the analysis of the relationship of these variables with PBJW and GBJW was not performed. All the variables included in the analysis had a distribution close to normal (skewness and kurtosis ranged from  $-1$  to  $1$ ). To assess the relationships between the variables, Pearson's  $r$  correlation coefficients were calculated (see table 4).

## CONVERGENT AND DIVERGENT VALIDITY

### 1. RUMINATION ABOUT SELF AND THE SOCIAL WORLD

A negative correlation between Rumination about Self and PBJW was noted ( $r = -0.14$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ), but the relationship between Rumination about the Social World and GBJW was not statistically significant, which, however, can be observed at the level of statistical trend ( $r = -0.13$ ;  $p < 0.055$ ). The lack of relationship between Rumination about Self and GBJW should be stressed ( $r = 0.00$ ). These data suggest that people who are convinced that the world is not fair to them more often ruminate about themselves (Rumination about Self scale question: I am thinking about past events, whose course I would like to change). People who are convinced that the world is fair to them experience fewer negative thoughts about the social world (Rumination about the Social World scale question: It hurts when some people get something in their lives that they do not deserve at all).

Polish researchers Baryła and Wojciszke (2005) noted that with age Rumination about Self decreases strongly, but Rumination about the Social World increases. It reflects a similar weak but positive correlation (Spearman's  $r_s$  coefficient) between age and faith in the world's justice towards the individual (PBJW;  $r_s = 0.16$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ; sample I).

On the basis of the correlation analysis, it can be concluded that PBJW and GBJW are separate theoretical constructs that are independent and, respectively, negatively related to ruminations about self and the social world.

### 2. SENSE OF SAFETY

According to Klamut (2019), a sense of safety is associated with the satisfaction of needs, the presence of satisfactory living conditions and the absence of threats, which allows people to act freely. The expected strong positive relationship between the sense of safety and the PBJW ( $r = 0.40$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ) and a slightly smaller one with the GBJW ( $r = 0.17$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ) was demonstrated. Most of the questions raised by

the “sense of safety” refer to the belief in one’s own safety (e.g. I currently feel that I have basic needs that give me confidence in the safety of my life) and some refer to the belief in the safety of reality (e.g. I feel safe in the current reality). Therefore, the resulting quantitative differences in relationships can be fully explained. Thus, the conviction of justice in life is positively correlated with the sense of safety.

Table 4. Correlations of PBJW and GBJW with rumination, personality traits and sense of safety (sample I: students and workers, N = 216)

Variables	PBJW	GBJW
Rumination about Self ( $\alpha = 0.95$ )	-0.14*	0.00
Rumination about the Social World ( $\alpha = 0.89$ )	-0.14*	-0.13
Sense of safety ( $\alpha = 0.85$ )	0.40***	0.17*
Reflection on security ( $\alpha = 0.63$ )	not applicable	not applicable
Extraversion ( $\alpha = 0.80$ )	0.10	0.20**
Agreeableness ( $\alpha = 0.66$ )	0.18**	0.21**
Conscientiousness ( $\alpha = 0.76$ )	0.09	0.14*
Emotional stability ( $\alpha = 0.81$ )	0.31***	0.14*
Openness to experiences ( $\alpha = 0.23$ )	not applicable	not applicable

$\alpha$  – Cronbach’s alpha coefficient; \*  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

Source: Authors’ own elaboration.

### 3. BIG FIVE MODEL

Positive correlations P/GBJW with emotional stability and agreeableness, relations GBJW with extraversion and conscientiousness were observed.

### THEORETICAL VALIDITY

The theoretical validity of the scale was assessed using an external criterion. The research stresses that parents of children with disabilities are characterised by lower level of BJW (Hatami, Panahi, Rezaei, Fathi, Zarbakhsh, 2016). This study compared the intensity of PBJW and GBJW in 32 mothers of disabled children and in women who do not have any disabled children. The structure of the last group of women corresponded to that of the mothers of disabled children and did not differ in terms of age or education. It was found that mothers of disabled children had a lower level of PBJW ( $U = 328.5$ ;  $Z = -2.46$ ;  $p = 0.01$ ) and did not differ in the level of GBJW ( $U = 1155$ ;  $Z = 1.54$ ;  $p = 0.12$ ) compared to women without children with disabilities. Similar results were obtained in the study of Shetty, Roopesh,

Dutt, Sneha and Roopesh (2016), which reported no difference in level of GBJW between parents of children with conduct disorder and parents of healthy children.

## DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to develop the Polish version of the BJW Scale, which allows to examine an individual's beliefs about world justice in general (GBJW) and world justice towards an individual (PBJW). As a result of the validation procedures carried out, it can be concluded that the Polish version of the BJW Scale is characterised by linguistic equivalence and authenticity in relation to the original version.

The CFA analysis confirmed the two-factor structure of the scale and showed an optimal fit of the model to empirical data. As highlighted above, the model fit parameters proved to be the best in comparison with adapted versions of the BJW Scale in other languages (Gouveia et al., 2018; Nartova-Bochaver et al., 2018).

In the samples of adults the reliability (Cronbach's alpha  $\alpha$  and McDonald's omega  $\omega$  coefficients) of the PBJW ( $\alpha = 0.92$ ,  $\omega = 0.92$ ) and GBJW Scales ( $\alpha = 0.85$ ,  $\omega = 0.84$ ) is very high. The reliability ( $\alpha$ ) of the Polish version of the BJW Scale is higher compared to the original version (0.82 for PBJW and 0.68 for GBJW; Dalbert, 1999), Brazilian (0.83 for PBJW and 0.69 for GBJW; Gouveia et al., 2018), Urdu (0.93 for PBJW and 0.66 for GBJW; Fatima, Khalid, 2007), Portuguese (0.83 for PBJW; Modesto et al., 2017) and Russian (0.89 for PBJW and 0.78 for GBJW; Nartova-Bochaver et al., 2018). In the sample of adolescents the reliability is also high (PBJW:  $\alpha = 0.72$ ,  $\omega = 0.73$ ; GBJW:  $\alpha = 0.84$ ;  $\omega = 0.84$ ).

During the adaptation of the BJW Scale, the convergent and divergent validity and the theoretical validity was checked using an external criteria. It was confirmed that as PBJW increases, the individual experiences less unpleasant and unwanted thoughts about himself and the social world. The lack of correlation between the GBJW and the rumination about self was demonstrated, and at the level of statistical trend a negative correlation between the GBJW and the rumination about the social world was noted. In terms of examining rumination, a PBJW is more important to the individual than a GBJW.

BJW is a relatively permanent disposition of the individual (Dalbert, 2001). It has been found that those who believe in the general justice of the world and its justice towards them feel more secure, probably by perceiving reality as predictable, structured and manageable. Based on correlation between P/GBJW and sense of safety, in the Polish sample the researchers' conclusion about the role of BJW, and especially PBJW as an individual resource (Dalbert, Donat, 2015; Nartova-Bochaver et al., 2019) was confirmed.

The analysis of P/GBJW relationships with personality traits in the Big Five Model revealed the presence of positive correlations between P/GBJW and emo-

tional stability and agreeableness, as well as GBJW with extraversion and conscientiousness. Polish results fully reflect data obtained in other cultures (Nudelman, 2013). All observed correlations of PBJW and GBJW with personality dimensions in the Polish study are very similar (qualitatively and quantitatively) to the data obtained in the validation study of the Russian version of the BJW Scale (Nartova-Bochaver et al., 2018). However, only in this study no correlation between extraversion and PBJW was observed and there was a correlation between agreeableness and PBJW which was not found in the Russian study (Nartova-Bochaver et al., 2018). The presence of this correlation in the Polish sample can probably be explained by the special meaning of the Golden Rule (Behave towards others as if you want others to behave towards you) (Zecha, 2011) and the ethics of reciprocity and the related expectations towards each other and the world, which are shaped in the personality of Poles by the strong position of Christianity in Poland. To sum up, the convergent and divergent validity has been confirmed by the presence and absence of significant correlations between BJW dimensions and other theoretical constructs – rumination, sense of safety and personality traits in the Big Five Model.

Using an external criterion, the theoretical validity of the scale was assessed. Mothers of disabled children took part in the study. According to the data of other researchers (Shetty et al., 2016), they were expected to have a reduced level of PBJW. Similar results were observed in the Polish sample.

It should be noted that the average score of PBJW is 3.77 (SD = 0.94), while the average score of GBJW is 3.10 (SD = 0.95) among adults. From an existential point of view, these data show that Polish respondents believe that the world is a little bit fair to them, but they do not agree that it is fair in general. It can be noted that according to Polish respondents the level of PBJW is higher than GBJW. This reflects the results of other studies, which noted that this trend is characteristic of individualistic societies (Nartova-Bochaver, Astanina, 2014). Similar conclusions were received by Skrzypińska (2003), who noted that young Poles are unlikely to believe in a just world. Men had a lower level of GBJW. There were no gender differences in PBJW. Considering the mixed results of gender differences in PBJW and GBJW in other cultures (Nartova-Bochaver et al., 2018), these data may characterise the specificity of the Polish sample.

In the sample of adolescents aged 11 to 15 the average score of PBJW is 3.41 (SD = 0.82) and the average score of GBJW is 3.47 (SD = 1.05). It is a less favourable situation than the opposite trend (PBJW > GBJW). Nonetheless, the level of PBJW and GBJW is approximately equal. This reflects data obtained in Belarus and Ukraine (Larionov et al., 2021). There were no gender differences in PBJW and GBJW among adolescents. Compared to Belarusian and Ukrainian adolescents (Larionov et al., 2021) Polish teenagers are characterised by a lower level of PBJW and GBJW. The average score of PBJW among German (4.23) and Indian school-children (4.87) (Donat et al., 2016) is much higher compared to Polish adolescents.

Considering the positive effects of P/GBJW on psychological well-being, these data may reflect the poorer mental well-being of Polish adolescents.

In the theoretical part of the article, it was emphasised that the PBJW is particularly important for the psychological functioning of an individual. It was also pointed out that in order to understand the system of the individual's relationship with the surrounding reality and to put forward appropriate hypotheses about the functional role of the BJW for the individual, it is necessary to examine both the PBJW and the GBJW and the relationship between these dimensions of BJW. The adapted BJW Scale fully serves this purpose.

### LIMITATIONS

In the study there is an uneven sample structure, which is expressed in the predominance of women over men. The majority of the respondents are young people and middle-aged people, while there are few older people in the sample. The test – retest reliability of the BJW Scale was not assessed.

### CONCLUSION

The Polish version of the BJW Scale is valid and reliable and has very good psychometric properties. It should be stressed that the scale is economic, with 13 short questions, which are clearly formulated. The use of a 6-point response scale allows for adequate differentiation of the P/BGJW level.

The BJW Scale can be applied in educational psychology, e.g., research on the role of P/BGJW and distress at school (Dalbert, Stoeber, 2005), workplace psychology (organisational justice perceptions) (Johnston, Krings, Maggiori, Meier, Fiori, 2016) and clinical psychology (P/BGJW as a personal resource in special groups, e.g., among deaf individuals) (Nartova-Bochaver et al., 2013), sociology and political science (the role of P/BGJW on social activity and political motivation) (Gulevich, Sarieva, Nevrujev, Yagiyayev, 2017) and in other areas of human knowledge.

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## ABSTRAKT

W artykule zaprezentowano proces adaptacji i właściwości psychometryczne polskiej wersji Skali Wiary w Sprawiedliwy Świat (Belief in a Just World Scale, BJW) opracowanej przez Dalbert. Skala BJW zawiera dwie podskale: Personalnej Wiary w Sprawiedliwy Świat (PBJW) oraz Ogólnej Wiary w Sprawiedliwy Świat (GBJW). Badanie było przeprowadzone w czterech próbach (N = 579): wśród studentów, osób pracujących, matek dzieci z niepełnosprawnością i nastolatków. Trafność narzędzia w aspekcie zbieżnym i różnicowym została oceniona na podstawie zależności PBJW i GBJW z ruminacją o sobie i świecie społecznym (Kwestionariusz Ruminacji), wymiarami osobowości w modelu Wielkiej Piątki (Inwentarz Osobowości TIPI) oraz z poczuciem bezpieczeństwa (Kwestionariusz Doświadczania Bezpieczeństwa). W próbie osób dorosłych rzetelność (alfa Cronbacha) PBJW wyniosła 0,92, a GBJW – 0,84. Potwierdzono dwuczynnikową strukturę skali BJW. Wskaźniki dopasowania modelu przyjęły następujące wartości: RMSEA (0,035; 90% CI: 0,022; 0,048), GFI (0,990), CFI (0,994), TLI (0,992), SRMR (0,055) i  $\chi^2/df$  (1,59). Polska wersja skali BJW jest trafna i rzetelna oraz charakteryzuje się bardzo dobrymi właściwościami psychometrycznymi. W badaniu wykazano, że polscy respondenci trochę się zgadzają z tym, że świat jest sprawiedliwy wobec nich (średnia PBJW to 3,77; SD = 0,94) oraz trochę się nie zgadzają z tym, że świat jest sprawiedliwy w ogóle (średnia GBJW to 3,10; SD = 0,95). W celu wysunięcia właściwych hipotez o funkcjonalnym znaczeniu BJW dla jednostki rekomenduje się badać jednocześnie zarówno PBJW, jak i GBJW, a także stosunek między tymi formami BJW.

**Słowa kluczowe:** wiara w sprawiedliwy świat; skala, właściwości psychometryczne; proces adaptacji

## ANNEX

**Skala Wiary w Sprawiedliwy Świat**  
**Belief in a Just World Scale**  
**(Dalbert, 1999; adaptacja polska: Larionov, Mudło-Głagolska, 2021)**

**Instrukcja**

Proszę określić, w jakim stopniu zgadzasz się z poniższymi twierdzeniami. Zakreśl kółkiem właściwą odpowiedź po prawej stronie.

1 – stanowczo się nie zgadzam; 2 – nie zgadzam się; 3 – trochę się nie zgadzam; 4 – trochę się zgadzam; 5 – zgadzam się; 6 – stanowczo się zgadzam

1	Wierzę, że na ogół zasługuję na to, co mnie spotyka	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	Zwykle jestem traktowany sprawiedliwie	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	Wierzę, że zwykle dostaję to, na co zasługuję	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	Ogólnie rzecz biorąc, to co zdarza mi się w moim życiu, jest sprawiedliwe	1	2	3	4	5	6
5	W moim życiu niesprawiedliwość jest raczej wyjątkiem niż regułą	1	2	3	4	5	6
6	Uważam, że większość rzeczy, które przytrafiają mi się w moim życiu, jest sprawiedliwa	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	Uważam, że ważne decyzje, które mnie dotyczą, są podejmowane sprawiedliwie	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	Uważam, że w gruncie rzeczy świat jest sprawiedliwym miejscem	1	2	3	4	5	6
9	Wierzę, że ludzie na ogół dostają to, na co zasługują	1	2	3	4	5	6
10	Jestem przekonany, że sprawiedliwość zawsze zwycięża nad niesprawiedliwością	1	2	3	4	5	6
11	Jestem przekonany, że na dłuższą metę ludzie otrzymają rekompensatę za niesprawiedliwość	1	2	3	4	5	6
12	Mocno wierzę, że niesprawiedliwość we wszelkich sferach życia (np. zawodowej, rodzinnej, politycznej) jest raczej wyjątkiem niż regułą	1	2	3	4	5	6
13	Uważam, że podejmując ważne decyzje, ludzie starają się być sprawiedliwi	1	2	3	4	5	6

## KLUCZ DO SKALI WIARY W SPRAWIEDLIWY ŚWIAT

Pozycje testowe (pytania) od 1 do 7 odnoszą się do podskali Personalnej Wiary w Sprawiedliwy Świat (Personal Belief in a Just World). Wynik tej podskali to średnia sumy punktów odpowiedzi z tych pozycji testowych, tj.  $\text{wynik} = (\text{item 1} + \text{item 2} + \text{item 3} + \text{item 4} + \text{item 5} + \text{item 6} + \text{item 7}) / 7$ .

Pozycje testowe od 8 do 13 odnoszą się do podskali Ogólnej Wiary w Sprawiedliwy Świat (General Belief in a Just World). Wynik tej podskali to średnia sumy punktów odpowiedzi z tych pozycji testowych, tj.  $\text{wynik} = (\text{item 8} + \text{item 9} + \text{item 10} + \text{item 11} + \text{item 12} + \text{item 13}) / 6$ .