Narcissism and Discrepancy between Self and Friends' Perceptions of Personality

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Abstract

Objective—Most research on narcissism and person perception has used strangers as perceivers. However, research has demonstrated that strangers' ratings are influenced by narcissists' stylish appearance (Back, Schmukle, & Egloff, 2010). In the present study, we recruited participants and their close friends, individuals whose close relationship should immunize them to participants' superficial appearance cues. We investigated the relation between narcissism and personality ratings by self and friends.

Method—Participants (*N* = 66; 38 women; mean age = 20.83) completed the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (Raskin & Terry, 1988) and described their personality on the 100-item California Adult Q-sort (CAQ; Block, 2008). Participants' personality was also described on the CAQ by close friends. The "optimally adjusted individual" prototype was used to summarize participant and friend personality ratings (Block, 2008).

Results—Participants with high narcissism scores were ascribed higher optimal adjustment by self than by friends.

Conclusion—Narcissistic individuals' self-ratings are extremely positive and more favorable than friends' ratings of them.

Keywords

narcissism; person perception; optimal adjustment; agency; communion

Narcissism is characterized by excessive self-admiration and feelings of superiority. Despite these egocentric tendencies, individuals high in narcissism are more likely to make favorable first impressions on others than those low in narcissism (Back, Schmukle, & Egloff, 2010; Paulhus, 1998; but see Carlson, Naumann, & Vazire, 2011). In a recent study, however, Back and colleagues (2010) reported that the positive relation between narcissism and favorable impressions resulted from stylish appearance rather than desirable personality characteristics. In the present study, we investigated the relation between narcissism and personality characteristics rated by self and friends, and whether the results converge across

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the two data sources. We presumed that friends' shared experiences are the primary information source for making personality judgments and overshadow superficial appearance cues described by Back et al. (2010).

Narcissism and Self-Perception

The construct of narcissism presumes a favorable self-concept that empirical research has confirmed. Narcissism is positively related to self-rated intelligence, physical attractiveness (Gabriel, Critelli, & Ee, 1994; Campbell, Rudich, & Sedikides, 2002), extraversion, likeability, sense of humor, and well-being (Carlson, Vazire, & Oltmanns, 2011). Similarly, narcissism is positively related to ascribing positive traits to self after comparing oneself to objective criteria (Gabriel et al., 1994), the average person, or romantic partners (Campbell et al., 2002). Furthermore, narcissism is positively related to self-reported happiness, but negatively related to anxiety, sadness, and depression (Sedikides, Rudich, Gregg, Kumashiro, & Rusbult, 2004; Rose, 2002; Watson & Biderman, 1993; Wink, 1992).

People who score high on measures of narcissism tend to exaggerate their achievements and performance relative to those low on narcissism. After completing a leaderless group discussion exercise, participants high in narcissism rated their performance higher than observers and group members rated it (John & Robins, 1994; Gosling, John, Craik, & Robins, 1998; Robins & Beer, 2001). Similarly, narcissism predicted students' over-estimation of course grades in an actual class (Farwell & Wohlwend-Lloyd, 1998).

The relation between narcissism and overly positive self-perception is stronger for agentic (i.e., competence as an independent individual) than communal (i.e., interpersonal connectedness) traits; and this relation occurs whether the self-concept is assessed with explicit or implicit measures (Campbell, Bosson, Goheen, Lakey, & Kernis, 2007; Campbell et al., 2002). Similarly, the relation between narcissism and agency was "heard" in daily language when participants wrote about a nostalgic event. Narcissism predicted the number of agentic references in participants' essays (Hart, Sedikides, Wildschut, Arndt, Routledge, & Vingerhoets, 2011). In sum, narcissism is associated with overly positive self-perception, especially in the domains of agentic characteristics.

Narcissism and Other-Perception

Relative to self-perception, the relation between narcissism and other-perception is more complex. Several studies have reported relations between narcissism and positive first impressions. After brief exposure, narcissistic individuals were rated by others as more likeable (Oltmanns, Friedman, Fiedler, & Turkheimer, 2004; Friedman, Oltmanns, Gleeson, & Turkheimer, 2006; Back et al., 2010) and funny (Carlson, Vazire et al., 2011) than their counterparts. However, these positive first impressions deteriorated over time. After their first meeting, relatively narcissistic participants were rated by peers as agreeable, extraverted, open, conscientious, and well-adjusted. Seven weeks later, the positivity of peers' ratings displayed a noticeable decline; the peers rated them low on agreeableness and adjustment and high on arrogance and hostility (Paulhus, 1998).

However, there are contradictory findings in the literature on narcissism and other-perception. In a study that included a brief interaction, narcissistic individuals were described as less agreeable, reliable, intelligent, and likeable than less narcissistic individuals (Carlson, Naumann et al., 2011). Similarly, listeners described high, relative to low, narcissism participants more negatively after listening to their audiotaped conversations (Morf, 1994). Similar to Paulhus' (1998) study, targets were rated at the start of the college semester and at the end (Carlson, Vazire et al., 2011). At the start of the semester, relatively narcissistic participants were rated as extraverted, open, humorous, arrogant, and self-enhancing. By the end of the semester, they were rated as disagreeable, and low on conscientiousness and intelligence. However, raters continued to view them as extraverted, humorous, arrogant, and self-enhancing. In sum, the empirical evidence is mixed regarding the relation between narcissism and favorable first impressions that deteriorate over time.

As described earlier, the relation between narcissism and positive first impressions may be due to superficial appearance cues rather than adaptive personality traits (Back et al., 2010). Participants rated targets on popularity in one of four conditions: face-to-face interaction, video, video without sound, or still photo of body. Narcissism and popularity were positively related in the first two conditions. However, this relation was mediated by targets' stylish clothing, charming facial expressions, self-assured body movements, and humorous verbal expression, suggesting that narcissistic individuals are more adept at creating façades that elicit favorable first impressions than their humble counterparts.

To differentiate the "impressive" management abilities from underlying personality traits, ratings by close others (e.g., friends, parents) are preferable to ratings by strangers. By recalling shared experiences in varying contexts and social settings, friends and family can differentiate genuine and strategic behaviors, and remove the narcissistic mask. Thus, we were surprised to find only a couple of studies on narcissism and person perception that included close others as raters. In one study, friends evaluated targets on three categories of traits: big five, positive (e.g., well-adjusted, honest), and narcissistic (e.g., arrogant, power-oriented; Carlson, Vazire et al., 2011). Participants' narcissism was related to friends' ratings on extraversion, disagreeableness, and narcissism. Narcissism and traits from the positive category were unrelated.

Carlson, Vazire et al. (2011) also examined narcissism and the discrepancy between self- and other-ratings. They created their discrepancy score by regressing self-ratings on other-ratings and retained the residuals (John & Robins, 1994). Positive residuals indicated that participants rated themselves higher on a trait than others rated them. Next, participants' narcissism and discrepancy scores were correlated. Results indicated that narcissistic individuals rated themselves higher on most positive, narcissistic, and big five traits, relative to their friends, except for agreeableness.

In a related study, well-acquainted friends evaluated one another on eight personality traits: agreeableness, reliability, likeability, well-being, surgency, intelligence, attractiveness, and narcissism (Carlson, Naumann et al., 2011). Friends' ratings of participants' narcissism were significantly related to participants' self-rated narcissism ($r = .30$). However, the correlations between friends' ratings of putatively positive traits and participants' self-rated

narcissism were weak or non-significant (i.e., effect sizes .20 or smaller[1]). In addition, when discrepancy scores (i.e., residual scores), derived from self- and friend-rated personality, were correlated with self-rated narcissism, significant positive correlations were reported for likeability, well-being, surgency, intelligence, attractiveness, and narcissism. These two studies suggest that the relation between narcissism and personality perceptions differ depending on who rates whose personality and that the extent to which self-ratings are more positive than friend-ratings is positively related to narcissism.

Finally, despite the conceptual link between narcissism and agency, few studies have examined narcissism and others' ratings of agency and communion. In one study (Buffardi & Campbell, 2008), judges viewed social networking web sites and rated targets' web profile. The targets' (i.e., web owners) narcissism scores were positively related to judges' ratings of agency and unrelated to communion, a result consistent with previous studies using self-report measures (Campbell et al., 2007; Campbell et al., 2002). We could not find one study that simultaneously evaluated narcissism, and self- and friend-rated agency and communion.

Issues with Previous Studies

The literature on self and others' perceptions of narcissism is important but incomplete. First, published studies include assessments of a relatively small set of personality traits, making it difficult to evaluate the relation between narcissism and self- and other-ratings on neutral (e.g., talkative) or non-narcissistic negative (e.g., generally fearful) characteristics (Carlson, Naumann et al., 2011; Carlson, Vazire et al., 2011). To expand the coverage of personality traits in the present study, participants and two friends completed the 100-item California Adult Q-Sort (CAQ; Block, 2008) which assesses a broad range of behavioral, cognitive, and emotional characteristics, including those related to agency and communion.

Second, researchers have used indirect or subjective methods to determine trait positivity in their assessment battery (Carlson, Vazire et al., 2011; but see Campbell et al., 2002). In the present study, nine clinical psychologists or psychiatrists evaluated each CAQ item in terms of optimal adjustment, which resulted in a quantitative index of optimal adjustment.

Third, in most previous studies on narcissism that included other-ratings, raters were permitted only brief exposure to target persons (Buffardi & Campbell, 2008; John & Robins, 1994; Back et al., 2010; Morf, 1994; Oltmanns et al., 2004; Friedman et al., 2006; but see Carlson, Vazire et al., 2011; Carlson, Naumann et al., 2011). As previously described, recent evidence suggests that when rating unacquainted targets, raters may be influenced by stylish appearance and superficial mannerisms (Back et al., 2010). In the present study, we recruited participants' close friends who had observed and interacted with targets for many years.

Finally, the relation between narcissism and person perception has been examined using the total narcissism score in most studies (Carlson, Vazire et al., 2011; Carlson, Naumann et al.,

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[1]Although the authors did not specify significance levels, the coefficients less than |.20| are assumed non-significant given that the number of participants was 82.

2011; Buffardi & Campbell, 2008; John & Robins, 1994; Paulhus, 1998; but see Back et al., 2010). However, due to the multifaceted nature of narcissism, researchers argue that it is critical to investigate the different facets of narcissism (Ackerman, Witt, Donnellan, Trzesniewski, Robins, & Kashy, 2011; Corry, Merritt, Mrug, & Pamp, 2008; Emmons, 1987). Therefore, we analyzed both total and subscale scores of the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI; Raskin & Terry, 1988; Emmons, 1987).

The Present Study

We examined the relation between narcissism and self- and friend-rated personality, and whether the two sets of results are similar using two different analytic strategies. The relation between narcissism, and agency and communion was also examined. Participants completed the NPI (Raskin & Terry, 1988)[2] and described their personality on the 100-item CAQ (Block, 2008). Two close friends rated each participant on the CAQ. To summarize the CAQ ratings by self and friends, we used the "optimally adjusted individual" prototype (Block, 2008). We hypothesized that (a) high scorers on the NPI will provide self-ratings of personality that exhibit higher correspondence with the optimal adjustment prototype than friends' ratings of personality and (b) narcissism will be positively related to agency, and unrelated to communion.

Method

The data analyzed in the present study are part of a larger dataset on personality and interpersonal perception. Subsets of the data have been published elsewhere (Vogt & Colvin, 2003; Carney, Colvin, & Hall, 2007; Colvin & Longueuil, 2001; Vogt & Colvin, 2005), but results presented in this article have not been previously reported. Only those procedures and measures pertaining to the present study are described.

Participants

Sixty-six participants (38 women) were recruited by posting advertisements around a large private university. All participants were undergraduate or graduate students. The mean age was 20.83 (SD = 3.41), ranging from 17 to 33. Participants received $100 in exchange for their participation.

Measures

Self-ratings—Participants completed the 40-item Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI; Raskin & Terry, 1988). They responded on a four-point scale to indicate how accurately each statement described them. Although the original NPI required participants to select one of two opposing statements that best described them, the Likert response format has been used in previous studies (McGregor, Nail, Marigold, & Kang, 2005; Jordan, Spencer, Zanna, Hoshino-Browne, & Correll, 2003). The NPI includes items such as "I really like to be the center of attention," and "I am an extraordinary person." Responses across the 40 items were

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[2]It should be noted that we measured narcissism using the NPI (Raskin & Terry, 1988) which assesses subclinical, grandiose narcissism. Thus, the results reported in this article may or may not apply to clinical or vulnerable narcissism. For the comparison between clinical and subclinical narcissism, see Miller and Campbell (2008). For the comparison between grandiose and vulnerable narcissism, see Miller, Hoffman, Gaughan, Gentile, Maples, and Campbell (2011).

averaged. Cronbach's alpha for the present sample was .89. In addition, the following four subscales were created (Emmons, 1987): Leadership/Authority (L/A; α = .84), Self-absorption/Self-admiration (S/S; α = .71), Superiority/Arrogance (S/A; α = .68), and Exploitativeness/Entitlement (E/E; α = .58).

Participants described their personality characteristics on the CAQ (Block, 2008). The CAQ consists of 100 statements, each on a separate card, that describe a full range of personality, cognitive, emotional, and social attributes. The task requires participants to place the cards into a forced, approximately normal, nine-category distribution ranging from 1 (*extremely uncharacteristic*) to 9 (*extremely characteristic*). Each participant's CAQ profile has a mean of 5.00 and a standard deviation of 2.09. The reliability and validity of the CAQ has been wellestablished (Block, 2008; Ozer, 1993).

Friend-ratings—Each participant recruited two close friends to rate his or her personality on the CAQ. Instead of the standard Q-sort procedure, friends rated each item on a five-point Likert scale. Thirty-seven participants were rated by two friends and 29 participants were rated by one friend. The CAQ profiles for participants rated by two friends were averaged. The narcissism scores for participants rated by two friends (M = 2.60, SD = 0.36) did not differ from those rated by one friend (M = 2.68, SD = 0.39), $t(64)$ = 0.86, p = .39. The average length of acquaintanceship was 70 months (SD = 55).

Prototype of optimally adjusted individual—We used the optimally adjusted person prototype developed by Block (2008). To create the prototype, nine clinical psychologists or psychiatrists sorted the CAQ to describe the characteristics of a hypothetical optimally adjusted, high functioning person. The clinicians' ratings were aggregated, resulting in the optimally adjusted individual prototype (Block, 2008, p. 131). The Spearman-Brown reliability for this aggregated prototype was .97. Psychological adjustment was represented by CAQ items that received high average ratings; maladjustment was represented by CAQ items that received low average ratings; CAQ items that received middling ratings represented neither adjustment nor maladjustment. Two exemplar CAQ items that received high ratings are "has warmth; has the capacity for close relationships" and "is dependable and responsible." Two items that received middling ratings are "is a talkative person" and "has a rapid personal tempo." Two items that received low ratings are "feels cheated and victimized by life" and "has a brittle ego defense system."

Agency and communion—Agency and communion measures were created from a subset of CAQ items (Dabbs & Colvin, 1998; Vogt & Colvin, 2003). Ten agency items were averaged separately for self (α = .76) and friend (α = .73); similarly, 10 communion items were averaged separately for self (α = .81) and friend (α = .88). Sample agency items are "has high aspiration level for self" and "is productive; gets things done" (also see tables). Sample communion items are "behaves in a sympathetic and considerate manner" and "is sociable, gregarious; emphasizes being with others." The mean optimal adjustment scores for agency (M = 6.70, SD = 1.49) and communion (M = 7.70, SD = 1.16) were not significantly different, $t(18)$ = −1.67, p = .11.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

Participants' total score on narcissism was correlated with self- and friend-rated CAQ items. The CAQ items significantly related to narcissism were divided into three tables according to the following scheme: CAQ items that were significant for (a) self only (Table 1), (b) friends only (Table 2), and (c) both self and friends (Table 3). Each table includes the corresponding optimal adjustment rating for each CAQ item.

CAQ items correlated with total narcissism—Overall, the pattern of correlations for self-rated CAQ items and narcissism revealed that narcissism was associated with participants' tendency to perceive themselves as psychologically well-adjusted (see Table 1). For example, narcissism was positively related to "has insight into own needs, motives, behavior" ($r = .27$), "values own independence and autonomy" ($r = .27$), and "has social poise and presence" ($r = .28$); and negatively related to "is self-defeating" ($r = -.45$), "has a brittle ego defense system" ($r = -.34$), and "feels a lack of meaning in life" ($r = -.25$). In contrast, the set of significant correlations between friends' CAQ ratings and participants' narcissism was associated with relatively low optimal adjustment ratings (see Table 2). For example, narcissism was related to friend-rated "is subtly negativistic" ($r = .39$), "tends to be self-defensive" ($r = .37$), and "tends to blame others for their own mistakes" ($r = .29$). Finally, several identical self- and friend-rated CAQ items were related to narcissism (see Table 3). With respect to optimal adjustment, these overlapping items were relatively neutral and included "is a talkative person" ($r = .32$ for self; $r = .39$ for friends) and "tends to be rebellious and non-conforming" ($r = .45$ for self; $r = .25$ for friends).

Agency and communion—Self-friend agreement on agency and communion was remarkable (see Table 4). Positive and significant correlations were obtained for participants' self- and friend-rated agency ($r = .46$) and communion ($r = .45$). The relation between narcissism and agency was clear and consistent. The total narcissism score and four subscales were positively related to both self- and friend-rated agency. However, the relation between narcissism and communion was less clear. There was a tendency for narcissism to correlate negatively with communion, but significant correlations were found only for E/E and self-rated communion ($r = -.35$), and for L/A and friend-rated communion ($r = -.24$).

Primary Analyses

Our primary goal was to determine whether the correlation patterns between narcissism and self- and friend-ratings of personality were similar or different. Two different analytic strategies were used to answer the question.

Optimal adjustment by group—As described earlier, the significant correlations between participants' total narcissism and self- and friend-rated CAQ items were sorted into three groups: CAQ items that were significant for (a) self only (Table 1), (b) friends only (Table 2), and (c) both self and friends (Table 3). The following set of analyses was conducted to examine whether mean optimal adjustment differed among the three groups. First, the optimal adjustment scores associated with negative correlations were reverse-

keyed. As a result, low adjustment scores negatively related to narcissism received high adjustment scores, and vice versa. Second, an analysis of variance was conducted in which group (i.e., Tables 1–3) and optimal adjustment were the independent and dependent variables, respectively. Table 5 shows that optimal adjustment ratings were significantly different by group, $F(2, 46) = 7.14$, $p = .002$, $\eta^2 = .24$. A Tukey test revealed the difference between self and friend groups was the only significant comparison, $p = .002$. In other words, the optimal adjustment ratings for significant correlations between narcissism and self-rated CAQ items were higher than the comparable correlations between narcissism and friend-rated CAQ items. The same procedure was conducted for the each of the NPI subscales, and similar results were found, except for E/E (see Table 5).

Narcissism and discrepancy between self and friends' personality ratings—
The results presented in Table 1–3 reveal correlation patterns between narcissism and CAQ ratings that differ by rating source (i.e., self vs. friends). However, these results do not directly compare self- and friend-ratings on individual CAQ items. Therefore, we evaluated the relation between narcissism and the discrepancy in optimal adjustment ratings between self- and friend-rated CAQ items. The analysis required three steps. First, we calculated the discrepancy between self- and friend-ratings, one CAQ item at a time, using the self-criterion residual method (John & Robins, 1994). Over the entire sample, participants' self-ratings on one CAQ item were regressed on friends' ratings of the corresponding CAQ item. The procedure was repeated for all CAQ items. The residuals from each analysis were retained and represented the extent to which participants rated themselves higher or lower on a CAQ item relative to friends' ratings of them. Second, each participant's 100 discrepancy scores were correlated with the 100 CAQ optimal adjustment ratings, resulting in a correlation coefficient for each participant (i.e., profile correlation). Positive rs indicate that participants rated themselves higher on adjustment items relative to friends' ratings, and lower on maladjustment items relative to friends' ratings. In step three, participants' correlation coefficients obtained in step two were correlated with participants' total narcissism score. This analysis produced one correlation coefficient, $r = .43$, $p < .001$, indicating that people who scored higher on narcissism were more likely than those scoring lower on narcissism to rate adjustment items as more descriptive and maladjustment items as less descriptive of themselves relative to friend-ratings. The same procedure was conducted for each of the four subscales. As shown in Table 6, the correlations were significant for L/A ($r = .39$), S/S ($r = .52$), and S/A ($r = .35$), but not for E/E ($r = −.02$). These results conceptually replicate the results reported in Table 5.

Discussion

We examined the pattern of relationships between narcissism and personality ratings across two sources of ratings (i.e., self and friends) and two analytic strategies. The correlations between narcissism and self-rated CAQ items demonstrated that people who scored higher on narcissism offered more flattering self-portrayals than those who scored lower on narcissism. In contrast, the correlations between narcissism and friends' CAQ ratings indicated that people with higher narcissism scores were described by friends as more maladjusted than their humble counterparts. Finally, several correlations between narcissism

and self- and friend-ratings on the same CAQ items were significant. The mean optimal adjustment rating for these items was 5.21 (on 9-point scale), suggesting that relatively neutral, or low evaluative, traits tend to exhibit higher self-friend agreement (John & Robins, 1993).

In a second set of analyses that compared self and friends' ratings by individual trait, we found the discrepancy between self- and friend-ratings depended on the optimal adjustment rating of the trait being evaluated. High scorers on narcissism tended to rate adjustment-related traits as more self-descriptive, and maladjustment-related traits as less self-descriptive relative to friends' ratings. The two analytical approaches used in the current study were quite different yet produced conceptually similar results. The observed convergence, as Brunswik (1947) argued many years ago, is one of several types of replication that serves to bolster confidence in empirical results.

The discrepancy between self and friends' ratings is theoretically meaningful and represents a core attribute of narcissism in social interactions (Paulhus, 1998). If narcissism reveals itself via unrealistically positive self-perception, friends will routinely experience narcissistic individuals' grandiose self-assertions and egotistical behavior. The distorted lens through which narcissistic individuals observe themselves reveals behavior that is personally charming, intellectually engaging, and colorful. When first acquainted, friends may share this positive illusion. But over time, friends will become familiar with narcissistic individuals' negativistic, self-defensive, and insensitive behavior.

With respect to the NPI subscales, the results from the two analyses were identical. Specifically, in both analyses, the discrepancy between self- and friend-perception was observed for L/A, S/S, and S/A, but not for E/E. These results are comparable to the findings of Back et al. (2010) who reported that among the four subscales, E/E was most strongly related to positive impressions held by others. As shown in Table 5, E/E was the only subscale in which the mean was higher for the "only friend" group than the "only self" group, although the difference was not significant. Furthermore, the mean adjustment score in the only friend group was highest for E/E. In sharp contrast, the mean adjustment score in the only self group was lowest for E/E. Given the lack of research on the relation between the NPI subscales and person perception, there is little basis for speculating why the most maladjusted aspect of narcissism is related to positive perceptions by others (for more detailed discussion, see Back et al., 2010; Emmons, 1987). More research is encouraged to answer this question.

Although most of the self-rated CAQ items positively related to narcissism received relatively high optimal adjustment ratings, a few self-rated CAQ items that received high adjustment ratings were negatively related to narcissism. These few items were associated with communion (e.g., "behaves in a sympathetic and considerate manner" and "is giving, generous toward others"). This finding is consistent with the viewpoint that narcissistic individuals are agency-oriented, and will sacrifice interpersonal relationships to maintain their grandiose self-concept (for a detailed discussion about the agency model of narcissistic self-regulation, see Campbell & Foster, 2007).

A recent study described an issue that could apply to the current findings. When researchers ask participants to recruit friends as informants, participants tend to recruit people who like them. Thus, friends' ratings of participants often include positivity bias and less variability on evaluative items (i.e., range restriction; Leising, Erbs, & Fritz, 2010). In terms of the present study, range restriction could influence CAQ items with high (i.e., adjustment) and low optimal adjustment ratings (i.e., maladjustment), but not CAQ items with middling ratings (i.e., neutral). To test this possibility, we conducted a multiple regression analysis in which optimal adjustment scores and CAQ item standard deviations were predictor and criterion, respectively. The results revealed a significant negative curvilinear relation between CAQ optimal adjustment ratings and CAQ item standard deviations, $t(99) = -2.84$, $p = .006$, indicating CAQ items associated with adjustment or maladjustment had smaller standard deviations than neutral CAQ items, confirming range restriction in friends' ratings.

However, this does not undermine our findings. Despite evidence for range restriction, there were significant correlations between narcissism and friend-rated CAQ items, many of which received low adjustment ratings. According to Leising et al. (2010), the implication of this finding is that more significant correlations would have been obtained between narcissism and "maladjusted" CAQ items had participants not recruited close friends, a result that would have strengthened, rather than weakened, our results. Thus, our conclusions remain despite the presence of range restriction.

The present study is silent about the causal direction between narcissism and self-perception. Some theorists have argued that narcissism is a compensatory mechanism for an underlying fragile self-concept. This process produces a public self-concept that refutes evidence of personal weakness (Kohut, 1977; Kernberg, 1975; Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001). If the direction of causality is reversed, it could be argued that chronic positive self-distortion may alter the self-concept and foster behavioral tendencies typical of narcissistic individuals (Millon, Grossman, Millon, Meagher, & Ramnath, 2004). In contemporary society, praise is showered on children from parents, teachers, and coaches, independent of behavior or performance. The effect on children of receiving continuous, unrealistically positive, and non-contingent praise is unknown. However, if these messages are internalized, children's developing self-concept and social reality might diverge.

In conclusion, relatively narcissistic participants' self-ratings were associated with higher psychological adjustment than friends' ratings of them. While these individuals frequently elicit positive first impressions (Paulhus, 1998; Back et al., 2010; but see Carlson, Naumann et al., 2011), their charming façade fades over time until even "close" friends characterize their personality traits as maladjusted.

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Table 1

Narcissism Significantly Correlated only with Self-Rated CAQ Items

CAQ Item	Correlation		M (SD)		AS
	N-S	N-F	Sª	Fᵇ	
88. Is personally charming	.38***	.10	5.80 (1.55)	4.17 (0.73)	6
65. Pushes and tries to stretch limits and rules	.32**	.24	4.58 (2.01)	3.04 (1.02)	4
98. Is verbally fluent	.32**	.14	5.45 (1.87)	3.95 (0.98)	6
59. Is concerned about own body	.30*	.17	5.52 (1.35)	3.83 (0.80)	4
57. Is an interesting, colorful person	.28*	.06	5.89 (1.52)	4.41 (0.63)	7
92. Has social poise and presence	.28*	.07	5.53 (1.76)	3.62 (0.70)	7
60. Has insight into own needs, motives	.27*	.05	6.33 (1.55)	3.90 (0.73)	9
96. Values own independence (A)	.27*	.10	6.67 (1.83)	4.34 (0.71)	8
51. Places high value on intellectual matters	.24*	.22	6.48 (1.60)	4.07 (0.74)	8
55. Is self-defeating	-.45***	-.22	3.64 (2.08)	2.59 (0.85)	1
72. Doubts own adequacy as a person	-.44***	-.24	5.23 (1.95)	3.13 (0.90)	4
9. Is uncomfortable with uncertainty	-.42***	-.06	4.79 (1.61)	3.29 (0.83)	3
13. Is thin-skinned	-.42***	.05	5.20 (1.97)	2.94 (1.00)	3
47. Has a readiness to feel guilty	-.41***	-.24	5.08 (2.22)	2.94 (0.97)	3
40. Is generally fearful	-.35**	-.06	3.38 (1.50)	2.49 (0.99)	2
89. Compares self to others	-.35**	-.12	5.64 (1.68)	3.37 (0.89)	4
5. Is giving, generous toward others (C)	-.34**	-.19	6.80 (1.60)	4.13 (0.76)	7
45. Has a brittle ego defense system	-.34**	-.11	3.50 (1.55)	2.30 (0.92)	1
17. Behaves in a sympathetic manner (C)	-.30**	-.19	6.76 (1.69)	4.17 (0.70)	8
43. Is facially and/or gesturally expressive	-.29*	-.07	5.95 (1.72)	3.95 (0.95)	6
22. Feels a lack of meaning in life	-.25*	.05	3.27 (1.96)	2.05 (0.82)	1
48. Keeps people at a distance (C, r)	-.24*	-.14	3.44 (2.11)	2.06 (0.92)	2

Note. N = total narcissism; S = self-rated CAQ; F = friend-rated CAQ; AS = adjustment score; A = agency items; C = communion items. r = reverse-coded. A superscripted "a" indicates that scores can potentially range from 1 to 9; "b" from 1 to 5.

*
p .05.

**
p .01.

***
p .001.

Table 2

Narcissism Significantly Correlated only with Friend-Rated CAQ Items

CAQ Item	Correlation			M (SD)			AS
	N-S	N-F		S^a	F^b		
1. Is critical, skeptical, not easily impressed	.13	.46***		4.85 (1.99)	3.05 (1.09)		6
36. Is subtly negativistic; sabotage others (C, r)	.14	.39***		2.68 (1.65)	1.68 (0.87)		2
12. Tends to be self-defensive	−.27*	.37**		4.79 (1.72)	2.77 (0.95)		3
74. Feels satisfied with self	.18	.36**		4.68 (1.95)	3.60 (0.92)		6
67. Is self-indulgent	−.06	.30*		4.15 (1.85)	3.14 (0.88)		5
25. Over-controls needs and impulses	−.17	.30*		3.92 (1.80)	2.52 (0.84)		3
80. Interested in members of the opposite sex	.15	.30*		7.12 (1.47)	4.42 (0.84)		7
23. Tends to blame others for own mistakes	−.14	.29*		3.32 (1.65)	1.87 (0.79)		3
94. Expresses hostility, angry feelings directly	.09	.29*		3.70 (1.97)	2.84 (1.08)		6
31. Regards self as physically attractive	.10	.28*		4.82 (1.92)	3.16 (0.98)		5
61. Likes others to be dependent on him/her	.08	.28*		3.55 (1.67)	2.42 (0.99)		3
99. Is self-dramatizing, histrionic	.14	.26*		3.64 (1.45)	2.74 (1.11)		4
33. Is calm, relaxed in manner.	−.05	−.25*		5.27 (1.99)	3.58 (0.95)		8

Note. N = total narcissism; S = self-rated CAQ; F = friend-rated CAQ; AS = adjustment score; C = communion items. r = reverse-coded. A superscripted "a" indicates that scores can potentially range from 1 to 9; "b" from 1 to 5.

*
  p .05.

**
  p .01.

***
  p .001.

Table 3

Narcissism Significantly Correlated with both Self- and Friend-Rated CAQ Items

CAQ Item	Correlation		M (SD)		AS
	N-S	N-F	Sᵃ	Fᵇ	
71. Has high aspiration level for self (A)	.45 ***	.41 ***	6.73 (1.73)	4.08 (0.83)	6
62. Tends to be rebellious	.45 ***	.25 *	4.56 (1.93)	2.83 (1.14)	5
52. Behaves in an assertive fashion (A)	.44 ***	.42 ***	5.15 (2.03)	3.86 (0.92)	6
8. Appears to be highly intelligent	.34 **	.29 *	6.36 (1.69)	4.49 (0.48)	6
91. Is power-oriented (A)	.32 **	.47 ***	4.70 (2.23)	3.20 (1.00)	5
4. Is a talkative person	.32 **	.39 ***	5.68 (1.95)	3.97 (0.96)	5
73. Tends to see sexual overtones	.29 *	.27 *	4.52 (1.82)	2.79 (1.07)	4
27. Is condescending toward others	.26 *	.51 ***	3.08 (1.58)	2.23 (1.15)	3
37. Is guileful, deceitful, manipulative (C, r)	.26 *	.33 **	2.39 (1.94)	1.62 (0.88)	2
19. Seeks reassurance from others	−.51 ***	−.38 *	5.36 (1.81)	2.73 (1.04)	5
30. Gives up when faced with frustration (A, r)	−.46 ***	−.27 *	3.77 (1.62)	2.18 (0.85)	4
14. Genuinely submissive (A, r)	−.36 *	−.41 ***	3.47 (2.06)	2.39 (0.97)	4
42. Tends to delay or avoid taking action (A, r)	−.35 *	−.36 *	4.14 (1.67)	2.31 (0.89)	3
79. Tends to ruminate	−.28 *	−.32 *	5.32 (1.61)	2.83 (1.04)	3

Note. N = total narcissism; S = self-rated CAQ; F = friend-rated CAQ; AS = adjustment score; A = agency items; C = communion items. r = reverse-coded. A superscripted "a" indicates that scores can potentially range from 1 to 9; "b" from 1 to 5.

*
p .05.

**
p .01.

***
p .001.

Table 4

Correlations for Narcissism, Agency, and Communion

		Agency		Communion	
		Self[a]	Friend[b]	Self[a]	Friend[b]
Agency	Self	—	.46***	-.11	-.27*
	Friend		—	-.20	-.08
Communion	Self			—	.45***
	Friend				—
Total narcissism		.54***	.48***	-.14	-.20
Leadership/Authority		.57***	.48***	-.19	-.24*
Self-absorption/Self-admiration		.29*	.27*	.14	-.11
Superiority/Arrogance		.44***	.38**	-.13	-.23
Exploitativeness/Entitlement		.29*	.34**	-.35**	-.16
M		6.07	3.81	6.67	4.09
(SD)		(1.03)	(0.52)	(0.96)	(0.59)

Note. A superscripted "a" indicates that scores can potentially range from 1 to 9; "b" from 1 to 5.

*
p .05.

**
p .01.

***
p .001.

Table 5

Mean of optimal adjustment scores per group

	M (SD)			F	p	η^2
	Only self	Only friend	Both			
Total narcissism	6.55(1.83)[a]	4.23(1.82)[b]	5.49(1.82)[a, b]	7.14	.002	.24
Leadership/Authority	6.14(1.96)[a]	4.22(2.33)[b]	5.36(1.29)[a, b]	3.28	.049	.15
Self-absorption/Self-admiration	6.83(1.38)[a]	4.22(1.79)[b]	6.30(1.16)[a]	10.11	<.001	.37
Superiority/Arrogance	6.38(1.67)[a]	4.21(1.85)[b]	5.50(0.85)[a, b]	6.99	.003	.27
Exploitativeness/Entitlement	3.80(2.10)[a]	5.00(1.49)[a]	4.50(1.64)[a]	1.14	.337	.09

Note. Only self = significant narcissism-CAQ correlations only for self-ratings; Only friends = significant narcissism-CAQ correlations only for friend-ratings; Both = significant narcissism-CAQ correlations for both self- and friend-ratings. The same superscripts within each row indicate no significant difference between groups according to the Tukey HSD test.

Table 6

Correlations for Narcissism and the Discrepancy in Adjustment between Self- and Friend-Rated Personality

	M (SD)	2	3	4	5	6
1. Discrepancy	.02 (.21)	.43***	.39***	.52***	.35**	−.02
2. Total narcissism	2.63 (0.37)	–	.89***	.72***	.83***	.67***
3. Leadership/Authority	2.60 (0.60)		–	.54***	.75***	.52***
4. Self-absorption/Self-admiration	2.72 (0.47)			–	.45***	.33**
5. Superiority/Arrogance	2.52 (0.48)				–	.46***
6. Exploitativeness/Entitlement	2.50 (0.47)					–

**
p .01.

***
p .001.