

**A study of the self-evaluation process: An examination from the viewpoints of self-evaluation motivations and reference to other persons and mental adaptation**

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In this study, a social psychological examination of the self-evaluation process was performed through arguments in six chapters. In particular, this study was performed from the viewpoints of self-evaluation motivations and references to other persons and mental adaptation. Based on several discussions in prior studies, self-assessment and self-enhancement motivation were set as the main motivations for self-evaluation in this study. In addition, it was assumed that appropriate network members, defined as "Reference Persons" in this study, are selected in accordance with the evaluation that is needed.

In Chapter 1, some points of examination in this study and several prior studies were indicated, and the theoretical model examined in this paper was presented. This theoretical model was based on the Self-Concept Enhancing Tactician (SCENT) model (Sedikides & Strube, 1997). In particular, this model as presented in this paper pointed out three important viewpoints. First, it was required to take into consideration the context of situations in which some kinds of self-evaluation motivations are elicited about references to other persons in the self-evaluation process. Second, this study focused on self-esteem as an individual difference variable, and investigated the possibility that people with low self-esteem could not treat the self-evaluation process as successfully as people with high self-esteem. And third, it was necessary to investigate the relationship between references to others' and one's own mental adaptation.

In Chapter 2, the relationship between situational factors and the self-evaluation process was examined. A total of two hundred and twenty six students (undergraduates, graduate students, and nursing school students) completed a questionnaire that included a hypothetical situation on either task-relevant or socio-emotional events. Task-relevant events activated the subjects' self-assessment motivation, and this motivation increased the subjects' reference for those usually viewed as sources of rational advice. On the other hand, socio-emotional events activated the subjects' self-enhancement motivation, and this motivation increased the subjects' reference for those usually viewed as sources of compassionate advice. Furthermore, the subjects' reference for the rational aspect was higher than that for the compassionate aspect after task-relevant events, and the subjects' reference for the compassionate aspect increased gradually. On the other hand, the subjects' reference for the compassionate aspect was higher than that for the rational aspect after socio-emotional events, and this tendency was sustained.

In Chapter 3, the self-evaluation process was examined using a diary style questionnaire. In particular, this examination aimed at clarifying the aspect of the relationship between self-evaluation motivations and referring to other persons in the self-evaluation process during everyday life. Forty-nine nursing school students were asked to write the details of the event, provide state self-esteem and self-evaluation motivations, and write down the names of those they

selected as “Reference Persons”, as soon as possible after experiencing a task-relevant event. Thirty-two participants wrote diary style questionnaires more than three days a week. As a result, the three main findings were as follows: For self-assessment motivation at task-relevant events, the subjects tended to select more rational “Reference Persons”; Low state-self-esteem individuals tended to seek self-relevant information much the same as high state-self-esteem individuals; High state-self-esteem individuals tended to select more rational “Reference Persons” at task-relevant events. On the other hand, low state-self-esteem individuals tended to select more compassionate “Reference Persons” at task-relevant events. These results suggest that high self-esteem people and low self-esteem people have different aspects for the selection of “Reference Persons” in the self-evaluation process.

In Chapter 4, the suggestion mentioned in Chapter 3 was examined, using the concept of mind-set (e.g., Taylor & Gollwitzer, 1999). This chapter examined the possibility that individuals with high self-esteem and individuals with low self-esteem have different aspects about the self-evaluation process. In particular, it was investigated whether low self-esteem people would seek rational information because the self-assessment motivation would be elicited at the phase of the deliberative mind-set, but select compassionate “Reference Persons” because of self-defensive biases. An experimental questionnaire survey was carried out, and 102 undergraduates’ answers were used for data analysis. The results showed that after low self-esteem individuals considered their future status deliberately, a high level of self-assessment was sustained. But simultaneously, a self-defensive motivation was elicited, and low self-esteem individuals selected a compassionate “Reference Person”, rather than a rational “Reference Person”. These results indicate that individuals with low self-esteem could not get the self-relevant information needed for the immediate situation.

In Chapter 5, the relationship between people’s perception of their network members’ views of themselves, which is important in the self-evaluation process, and self-fulfillment was examined. It was assumed that appropriate network members are selected in accordance with the evaluation that is needed. A two-phase panel design study was performed. The results show that those who felt most fulfilled seemed to be able to choose the most appropriate network members as resource-providers for their self-evaluation. Furthermore, the results shown above were less salient for those with low self-esteem than for those with high self-esteem. The moderating effect of self-esteem for the self-evaluation process was also found.

In Chapter 6, the series of results for this study are summarized. The self-evaluation process is discussed from the viewpoints of situational factors and self-esteem as an individual difference and one’s mental adaptation. Finally, the remaining issues regarding the self-evaluation process are discussed.

**Key words:** self-evaluation process, self-evaluation motivation, reference to other persons, mental adaptation, self-esteem