

The Defensive Reactions and Automatic Emotion Regulation of Defensive High Self-Esteems under Threaten Situation

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According to different conscious level, we can distinguish self-esteem into explicit and implicit aspects. Individuals with high explicit self-esteem but low implicit self-esteem are called defensive high self-esteems (defensive HSE), in addition, individuals with both high explicit and implicit self-esteem are called secure high self-esteems (secure HSE). In this study, by comparing these two types of self-esteems' behavioral responses in threatening situations and automatic emotion regulations to negative emotion, we can further elaborate the heterogeneity of high self-esteem appearance. Study 1 which included 20 secure HSEs and 20 defensive HSEs tested that defensive HSE in face of threat stimuli will present more defensive reactions than do secure HSE. By manipulating two kinds of feedback situations (positive vs. negative feedback), the study 1 found that, in the receiving negative feedback, defensive HSE evaluated the source of threat (pseudo-intelligence tests) more negative than did secure HSE, and more to belittle outgroup (private students) score. In study 2 which included 18 secure HSEs and 17 defensive HSEs, we further explored whether self engage in negative emotion would cause different regulation time to two types of high self-esteems. By using modified affective priming task, we found that when priming subliminal self, defensive HSE's automatic negative emotion regulation is slower than that of secure HSE, and is also slower than that of secure HSE in positive emotion regulation situation. These findings did not show in none subliminal self primes. This study discussed that defensive HSE possess positive self views at public level but at implicit level they feel relatively negative about themselves that are fragile to threat, leading them uneasy to regulate their negative emotional state.

Keywords: *implicit self-esteem, explicit self-esteems, secure high self-esteem, automatic emotion regulation, defensive high self-esteems*