The Relationship Between Discrepancy of Explicit and Implicit Self-Esteem and In-Group Favoritism: Examination of the “Defensive Self-Esteem” in Japan

Tsutomu Fujii

Department of Japanese Language and Literature, Sungshin Women’s University, Republic of Korea

In the present study, author focused the discrepancy of explicit self-esteem and implicit self-esteem. Previous research revealed the discrepancy between explicit and implicit self-esteem evokes in-group favoritism (Jordan, Spencer, Zanna, Hoshino-Browne, & Correll, 2003). Participants high in explicit self-esteem but low in implicit self-esteem (called “defensive high self-esteem”) showed high in-group favoritism than both high explicit and implicit self-esteem (called “secure high self-esteem”) in particularly. Similar result was also replicated in Japan (Harashima & Oguchi, 2007). However, Harashima & Oguchi (2007) also pointed out the score of Japanese explicit self-esteem is differently from U.S.’s. Thus, it is important that accumulate about this kind of research and examine whether this phenomenon is observed cross-culturally or not.

A total of seventy graduate (60 females) students participated in this research. They completed the Rosenberg’s self-esteem scale (1965) for explicit self-esteem, and the Name Letter Task (Nuttin, 1985) for implicit self-esteem. Then, they engaged a reward distribution task included 3 scenes; share a scholarship, a meal charge, and wages of part-time job.

In line with suggestion of previous researches (Harashima & Oguchi, 2007; Jordan et al., 2003), participants high in explicit self-esteem but low in implicit self-esteem (defensive high self-esteem) showed high in-group favoritism than both high explicit and implicit self-esteem (secure high self-esteem) in two scenes; share a scholarship and wages of part-time job. As a result, generalizability for frames of “defensive” and “secure” high self-esteem was strengthened. However, low self-esteem holders didn’t show significant interaction for any variables. For future direction, more research that examine whether low explicit self-esteem participants do not show the discrepancy effect is needed.

Keywords: implicit self-esteem, explicit self-esteem, discrepancy