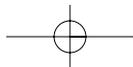
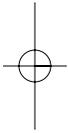
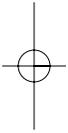
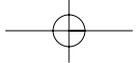
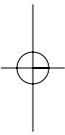
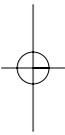


Self-Esteem Issues and Answers





Self-Esteem Issues and Answers

A Sourcebook on Current Perspectives

Edited by
Michael H. Kernis

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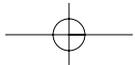
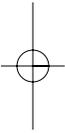
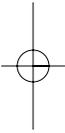
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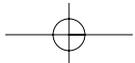
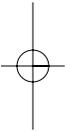
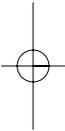
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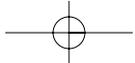
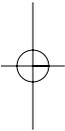
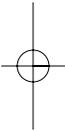
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Preface

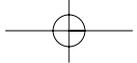
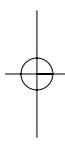
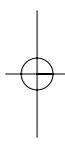
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General Introduction

The purpose of this book is to provide a comprehensive picture of the current state of knowledge regarding self-esteem and its role in psychological and interpersonal functioning. The contributors comprise an elite group of clinical, developmental, personality, and social psychologists who have made important contributions to our understanding of self-esteem. I asked each contributor to answer a given question in 4–6 pages using his or her own research and theoretical perspective as well as other relevant literature. I asked each author to make a strong case for his or her position without being critical of other's positions. The book is organized into five major sections: (1) How should self-esteem be conceptualized and assessed? (2) Development and determinants of self-esteem; (3) Self-esteem and psychological functioning; (4) Self-esteem in a social context; and (5) Future directions.

Michael H. Kernis



Question 4

What are the strengths and drawbacks of the major self-report and available nonreactive measures?
What steps can researchers take to accentuate their strengths and minimize their drawbacks?

The essays in this section focus on issues pertaining to the use of self-report and nonreactive measures to assess self-esteem.

Bosson focuses on the strengths and weaknesses of available self-report and nonreactive measures, outlines some important issues and concerns associated with each, and offers some suggestions for maximizing their effectiveness. As she notes, nonreactive measures can potentially capture aspects of self-esteem not represented in self-report measures.

Koestner and Mageau apply key lessons from the motive literature to the measurement of implicit and explicit self-esteem. They note that criticisms of self-report measures, in particular Rosenberg's Self-esteem Scale, are at odds with their considerable face and construct validity. They suggest that a more reasonable conclusion would be that while self-reported self-esteem is generally useful as an indicator of a person's subjective sense of self-worth, it might be vulnerable to distortions. The authors then discuss vital lessons from the motive literature and offer suggestions for future research.

Karpinski and Steinberg suggest that measures of self-esteem comprise three types: direct, indirect, and association based. Direct self-report measures assess individuals' conscious feelings of self-worth. Association-based measures (such as the IAT) assess individuals' implicit, or relatively automatic, nonconscious self-evaluations. Indirect measures are hybrid measures that tap aspects of both implicit and explicit self-esteem. Karpinski and Steinberg present data from their lab that addresses the validity of this distinction.

Tafarodi and Ho offer a conceptual critique of the implicit/explicit distinction. In addition, they argue that most self-report measures are incomplete because they do not capture what they believe are two separate, but interrelated components of global self-esteem: self-liking and self-competence. They then review evidence pertaining to the use of the Self-Liking/Self-Competence Scale (Tafarodi & Swann, 1995, 2001) to assess these dual self-esteem components.

11

Assessing Self-Esteem via Self- Reports and Nonreactive Instruments: Issues and Recommendations

JENNIFER K. BOSSON

Those of us interested in the role of self-esteem in people's overall functioning and adjustment may find ourselves simultaneously delighted and overwhelmed by the proliferation of measures available for capturing the self-esteem construct. Here, I attempt to provide some guidance by summarizing the major features of the available self-report and nonreactive self-esteem measures. In doing so, I outline what I perceive to be the most important issues and concerns associated with each type of measure, and offer suggestions for maximizing their effectiveness.

SELF-REPORT MEASURES OF SELF-ESTEEM

By far, most self-esteem research utilizes self-report measures (Blascovich & Tomaka, 1991). Not surprisingly, there are many available self-report scales from which to choose, reflecting a variety of theoretical perspectives. In their review of the available self-esteem scales, Blascovich and Tomaka identified several frequently used measures including Rosenberg's (1965) Self-Esteem Scale, Coopersmith's (1967) Self-Esteem Inventory, the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (Roid & Fitts, 1988), Janis and Field's (1959) Feelings of Inadequacy Scale, and the Texas Social Behavior Inventory (Helmreich, Stapp, & Ervin, 1974). I would add to this list the Self-Liking and Self-Competence Scale (Tafarodi & Swann, 2001) and the State Self-Esteem Scale (Heatherton & Polivy, 1991).

Self-report measures of self-esteem can boast multiple strengths, not the least of which is their directness. Because such measures are high in face validity,

respondents generally know what is being asked of them when they complete self-report scales. Such scales thus have the potential to tap personal knowledge that is unavailable to others (Hamilton, 1971), and reveal important information about people's self-theories. The high face validity of self-report measures also facilitates their interpretation by researchers. Despite some differing perspectives (e.g., Baumeister, Tice, & Hutton, 1989), self-esteem theorists generally concur that an individual's endorsement (or rejection) of the statement "I like myself" reflects something meaningful about his or her subjectively experienced evaluations of the self. Also in their favor, self-report measures of self-esteem demonstrate strong psychometric properties. They tend to be internally consistent and reliable across time, and they correlate as predicted with measures of other theoretically related constructs (Blascovich & Tomaka, 1991). Most importantly, self-reported self-esteem predicts a wide array of behaviors and outcomes including psychological well-being, academic achievement, relationship and life satisfaction, and physical health (Bednar & Peterson, 1995; DuBois & Tevendale, 1999; Mecca, Smelser, & Vasconcellos, 1989; Taylor & Brown, 1988). Indeed, most of our current knowledge of self-esteem and its correlates is based on people's self-reports. Finally, self-report measures of self-esteem are practical. From a researcher's perspective, self-report scales are inexpensive to reproduce, easy to administer, and simple to code, making them suitable for a wide range of measurement contexts and subject populations. From a respondent's perspective, self-report scales can be completed quickly and with little instruction, training, or effort. When time, space, finances, or human resources are limited, self-report measures of self-esteem may present an attractive option.

Not surprisingly, some of these strengths of self-report self-esteem scales also represent their greatest weaknesses. For instance, the directness of self-report self-esteem scales makes them easy to interpret, but it can also make their meaning transparent to respondents. Thus, people can easily manipulate the image they convey with their responses to such scales. Of particular concern to many researchers is the possibility that self-presentation motives will compel people to report unrealistically high self-esteem (Farnham, Greenwald, & Banaji, 1999; Paulhus, 1986), although it is also possible that people may downplay their feelings of self-worth. Either way, the directness of self-report scales allows respondents a high level of control over their scores, which raises the possibility that self-reported self-esteem does not reflect people's true feelings. On a related note, people may be unable to fully and/or accurately portray their self-esteem via self-reports. People may lack introspective access to their self-attitudes because they are motivated to avoid self-critical thoughts (Paulhus, 1986), or because aspects of their self-esteem operate in an implicit or "experiential" mode (Epstein & Morling, 1995). Moreover, self-report self-esteem scales are often limited in scope. Even scales designed to capture multiple dimensions of self-esteem do not assess all aspects of this multifaceted construct, such as its stability across time (Kernis, 1993), or its contingency on internal vs. external sources (Crocker, Luhtanen, Cooper, & Bouvrette, 2003). Despite their directness, then, self-reports may not tell the full story about respondents' self-esteem. Finally, the strong psychometric properties of self-report self-esteem scales may be offset by the numerous potential

sources of measurement error inherent to such scales. Minor changes in the wording, context, and formatting of self-report items can undermine the validity and reliability of people's responses (Schwarz, 1999). In a powerful illustration of this fact, Marsh and Yeung (1999) showed that people provided substantially different answers to the same global self-esteem items when these items were embedded in instruments that tapped different self-concept domains.

I offer two recommendations for accentuating the strengths and minimizing the weaknesses of self-report self-esteem measures. First, researchers should remain attentive to features of the measurement context including the wording of items, the order in which items and scales are administered, and the broader environment in which self-esteem is assessed. Several writers (e.g., Schwarz, 1999) offer useful strategies for minimizing the measurement problems that plague self-report measures, and I direct interested readers to their works. Second, investigators might do well to supplement self-report scales with additional measurement techniques that can shed light on self-esteem (Wells & Marwell, 1976). Several studies show that the relations between self-reported self-esteem and other theoretically related variables are clarified when multiple measures of self-esteem or self-concept are utilized (Bosson, Brown, Zeigler-Hill, & Swann, 2003; Jordan, Spencer, Zanna, Hoshino-Browne, & Correll, 2003; Kernis, Cornell, Sun, Berry, & Harlow, 1993; Schneider & Turkat, 1975). As our understanding of the multifaceted nature of self-esteem grows, it becomes more apparent that a single self-report scale, administered once, may not suffice to capture the construct.

NONREACTIVE MEASURES OF SELF-ESTEEM

Nonreactive measures have long been used by psychologists to tap aspects of personality, but their popularity among researchers of the self has increased dramatically in recent years. In an exploration of nonreactive self-esteem measures, Bosson, Swann, and Pennebaker (2000) reviewed the Implicit Association Test (IAT; Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998), two cognitive priming tasks (Hetts, Sakuma, & Pelham, 1999; Spalding & Hardin, 1999), a word-completion task (Hetts et al., 1999), and people's preferences for their birthday numbers and name letters (Nuttin, 1985). Additional nonreactive measures include the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT; Murray, 1943), the Self-Apperception Test (Aidman, 1999), the Go/No-Go Association Task (Nosek & Banaji, 2001), and the extrinsic affective Simon task (De Houwer, 2003). Interested readers are referred to Fazio and Olson (2003) for a review of other implicit measures that may be modified to assess attitudes toward the self.

A primary strength of nonreactive self-esteem measures is, of course, their indirectness. Although nonreactive measures vary in the extent to which their purpose is apparent to respondents, they tend to be less obvious than self-report measures (Fazio & Olson, 2003). When completing nonreactive measures, respondents do not answer direct questions about their self-esteem. Instead, they reveal their self-evaluations via reaction-time tasks that utilize priming techniques, or projective tests in which they respond to ambiguous self-relevant

stimuli. The meaning behind nonreactive measures is often masked by rapid, distorted, or subliminal presentation of stimuli, and respondents may work under time pressure or cognitive load. Thus, whether unaware of what is being measured or merely unable to control how they score, people cannot easily manipulate the image they convey on nonreactive measures. These measures may therefore capture self-evaluations that the bearer wishes to keep hidden. Also because of their indirectness, nonreactive measures may be well suited to tap people's automatic, spontaneous self-associations (often referred to as *implicit self-esteem*). This is an important asset, as implicit self-esteem is theorized to guide self-presentation and self-regulation behaviors, perceptual biases, and even major life decisions including choice of spouse, career, and residence (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995; Jones, Pelham, Mirenberg, & Hetts, 2002; Pelham, Mirenberg, & Jones, 2002). Of course, self-report scales may also capture elements of implicit self-esteem, just as responses to nonreactive measures may reflect explicit self-views (Gregg, 2003). Still, their indirectness should give nonreactive measures an advantage over self-reports when it comes to tapping automatic self-associations. If so, nonreactive measures may reveal aspects of self-esteem not captured by self-reports, as evidenced by recent findings (Aidman, 1999; Bosson et al., 2003; Jordan et al., 2003; Kitayama & Karasawa, 1997; Spalding & Hardin, 1999).

Despite their promise, however, a lack of clarity clouds the interpretation of several nonreactive self-esteem measures. For instance, because the self-esteem IAT (Greenwald & Farnham, 2000) measures the strength of automatic associations between the self and an evaluative dimension (e.g., good–bad), we can assume that an individual who categorizes self-relevant and pleasant words together particularly quickly on the IAT must associate the self with relatively strong, positive feelings. But does this mean that the individual necessarily *endorses* a favorable attitude toward the self (i.e., she believes personally, on some level, that the self is good), or can it merely suggest that the individual has learned, through prior exposure, to associate the concept “self” with the evaluation “good” (Karpinski & Hilton, 2001)? This interpretational nuance may be a subtle one, but it has nonetheless garnered a fair amount of empirical and theoretical attention (see Banaji, 2001; Karpinski & Hilton, 2001; Olson & Fazio, 2004). Similarly, whereas some argue that a preference for one's initials reflects high self-esteem, others suggest that people like their initials because of mere exposure (Jones et al., 2002). Until research clarifies the mechanisms that drive people's responses to nonreactive measures, interpretational ambiguities remain an issue of concern.

Furthermore, several of the available nonreactive measures have weak and/or inconsistent psychometric properties. Whereas the IAT and name-letter preferences demonstrate decent reliability and validity, other nonreactive measures tend to be unstable across time and measurement contexts, low in convergent validity, and limited in their predictive abilities (Bosson et al., 2000). Depending on which findings researchers review, their conclusions regarding the viability of nonreactive measures may thus differ dramatically. Contrast Koole and Pelham's (2003, p. 108) assertion that “name letter preferences...qualify as a valid marker for implicit self-esteem” with Schimmack and Diener's (2003, p. 105) conclusion

that “there is no compelling empirical evidence to suggest a construct of implicit self-esteem that is revealed in preferences for initials.” Considering that name-letter preferences are among the more reliable and valid of the nonreactive measures, these conflicting conclusions do not bode well for nonreactive measures as a whole. Finally, many of the available nonreactive self-esteem measures are costly, resource-wise. Multiple computers (and the laboratory space in which to house them) are needed if one is to collect response latency data efficiently, and nonreactive measures often take more time to administer and complete than self-report scales. The coding of nonreactive measures may be costly as well, requiring the training of independent coders or the writing of complex computer programs. Given the above-noted issues of reliability and validity, researchers may be (understandably) reluctant to devote the requisite resources to measures that cannot necessarily be counted on to “perform.”

What can researchers do to accentuate the strengths and minimize the weaknesses of nonreactive measures? My first suggestion is simple: Keep abreast of the literature in this area. New nonreactive measures are published with regularity, and existing ones are continually being updated and refined. As an example, Greenwald and his colleagues recently published a new algorithm for scoring the IAT that yields stronger results compared to the original algorithm (Greenwald, Nosek, & Banaji, 2003). Second, researchers should strive to measure and, if desired, control contextual features when administering nonreactive measures. Even more than self-reports, people’s responses to nonreactive measures may be highly influenced by factors such as previously administered questionnaires, recently primed concepts, affective states, and self-threats (Bosson et al., 2000; Gamar, Segal, Sagrati, & Kennedy, 2001; Jones et al., 2002; Karpinski & Hilton, 2001; Rudman, Ashmore, & Gary, 2001).

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, researchers hoping to accentuate the strengths of nonreactive self-esteem measures are advised to arm themselves with a strong theoretical model before designing studies and formulating hypotheses. Fazio and Towles-Schwen’s (1999) Motivation and Opportunity as Determinants model (MODE), and Epstein’s (1994) Cognitive Experiential Self Theory, may provide useful frameworks for understanding the nature of the processes tapped by the different nonreactive measures, as well as the conditions under which people’s responses to nonreactive measures should correlate with (and deviate from) their self-reports and behaviors. As such, these and other dual-process theories have the potential to clarify some of the confusing issues that surround nonreactive measures. For example, the MODE proposes that people’s responses to self-report and nonreactive measures should correlate to the extent that they lack either the motivation or the opportunity to control their responses. Moreover, motivation and/or opportunity may vary according to situational factors and individual differences, both of which can be measured and controlled. When viewed from the perspective of the MODE, the low predictive and convergent validity of several nonreactive measures (e.g., Bosson et al., 2000; Schimmack & Diener, 2003) may reflect features of the context in which these measures were administered rather than weaknesses of the measures themselves. Clearly, a richer theoretical

understanding of nonreactive measures and the processes they tap should enhance researchers' capacity to make the most of such measures. After all, non-reactive measures can only be as strong as the theories that guide their use.

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12

The Assessment of Implicit and Explicit Self-Esteem: Lessons from Motive Research

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Coming from outside of this research area, we have been struck by the almost universal suspicion that social and personality psychologists have recently voiced regarding self-report measures of self-esteem. The measures have been criticized as too global, too static, too culture-bound, too easily conflated with narcissism, too easily obscured by self-presentation and not really important to effective functioning. Other self-related personality variables, such as self-regulation, self-discrepancies, or self-determination have been put forward as alternative constructs that are more important to healthy functioning. Many researchers interested in self-esteem have shifted their attention to implicit measures such as the Implicit Association Test (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995) or the Initials Preference Task (Bosson, Swann, & Pennebaker, 2000). This field-wide consensus questioning the value of the traditional measurement of self-esteem led us to assume that there was probably little value in measuring people's self-esteem with self-report scales.

It was with surprise then that we found ourselves impressed when reading over the 10 items of the widely used Rosenberg's (1965) self-esteem scale. The items have an essential face validity that is disarming. They clearly capture the feelings of self-acceptance and self-worth that are central to a humanistic view of self-esteem (Rogers, 1951). Items such as "I feel that I am a person of worth" and "On the whole I am satisfied with myself" certainly seem to reflect the sentiments of someone with high self-esteem. One cannot but imagine that a parent or teacher would consider it important that their child or student reported positive responses to these items. Alternatively, a parent or teacher would be concerned if a child endorsed one of the reverse-scored items such as "I feel I do not have much to be proud of."

The psychometric qualities of the Rosenberg self-esteem scale (SES) also seem excellent, despite it being brief and easy to administer (Blascovich &

Tomaka, 1991). The scale is uni-factorial, with high internal consistency and good test-retest reliability. Its validity has been supported by correlations with peer reports and with other self-esteem related measures (Blascovich & Tomaka, 1991). Rosenberg self-esteem appears to function well as a marker of positive mental health. It is positively related to other well-being indicators such as life satisfaction and positive and negative affect, and it is negatively related to indicators of psychological distress (Schimmack & Diener, 2003). It has been shown to be unrelated to demographic factors such as gender, age, and marital status, and it is only moderately related to social desirability (Fleming & Courtney, 1984).

Why then is there such angst about self-report measures of self-esteem? One clear problem is that recent research has shown that some pretty disturbed individuals with rather serious personality problems, such as antisocial behavior and narcissism, often report very high levels of self-esteem (Bushman & Baumeister, 1998). Another problem is that there is evidence that people with high self-esteem sometimes behave in more maladaptive ways than those with low self-esteem. For example, after receiving ego-threatening negative feedback, people with high self-esteem have been shown to make risky and unwise choices about what level of challenge they can handle (Baumeister, Heatherton, & Tice, 1993). A third problem is that research has shown that self-esteem may serve a primarily defensive function rather than reflecting deep and stable feelings of self-worth. For example, there is evidence that when faced with mortality salience many people will inflate their estimates of self-esteem (Greenberg, Solomon, & Pyszczynski, 1997).

Despite these problems, one wonders why researchers have not concluded that self-reported self-esteem is a *generally* useful indicator of a person's subjective sense of worth and value but that it may be vulnerable to distortion in the face of extreme personality pathology or extreme situations. Such a conclusion would lead to the practical solution that in order to get a full picture of an individual's functioning, one would want to collect additional information—e.g., rule out narcissism, recent failure or mortality experiences, ensure stability over time, etc. Researchers have tended not to choose the route of supplementing self-report self-esteem measures with such ancillary measures, instead they have shifted their attention to nonreactive or implicit measures of self-esteem.

Implicit self-esteem has been defined as an automatic, over-learned, and non-conscious evaluation of the self that guides spontaneous reactions to self-relevant stimuli (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). The most commonly used method to assess implicit self-esteem is the Implicit Association Test (IAT) (Greenwald & Farnham, 2000), which is a computerized categorization task that measures the ease with which an individual automatically associates pleasant and unpleasant words with the self (Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998). A tendency to quickly associate pleasant rather than unpleasant words with the self is thought to reflect high implicit self-esteem. The IAT self-esteem measure demonstrated superior reliability, stability, and predictive validity relative to other implicit measures of self-esteem (Bosson et al., 2000). Interestingly, the IAT was moderately positively correlated with the Rosenberg scale, and it mirrored the Rosenberg in predicting how raters would evaluate an essay writer's self-esteem

and self-competence, whereas other implicit measures were unrelated to the Rosenberg and failed to predict raters' evaluations (Bosson et al., 2000).

The IAT self-esteem thus seems to be the most promising of the implicit self-esteem measures on psychometric grounds (there is ongoing debate regarding the IAT, cf. Karpinski, 2004), but there does seem to be general enthusiasm for response time measures of implicit self-esteem (Fazio & Olson, 2003). IAT self-esteem is marginally positively related to the Rosenberg self-esteem scale, and similarly predicts certain outcomes, but the two measures share only a small percentage of variance. The question that naturally arises then is how researchers should use these two relatively distinct measures of self-esteem. We would like to suggest that the history of work on implicit and explicit motives may serve as a useful guide for work on implicit and explicit self-esteem (Bosson et al., 2000). In the following section, we outline some insights derived from 50 years of motivation research on how to build a theory of implicit and explicit self-esteem.

Three distinct motives have received considerable attention over the previous 50 years: the need for achievement ("a recurrent concern with standards of excellence"), the need for power ("a recurrent concern with having impact or influence on others"), and the need for intimacy ("a recurrent concern with establishing warm, reciprocal relations with others"). From the earliest work in this area, researcher developed *both* implicit and self-report measures of each motive. Implicit measures were based on coding the thematic content of imaginative stories that participants told in response to ambiguous picture cues presenting achievement or social scenes. The coding systems were derived by arousing a particular motive (e.g., a convivial party for need for intimacy) and then comparing the stories written under aroused conditions with those written under neutral conditions (e.g., a classroom setting). The coding systems were objective and high levels of inter-rater reliability could be attained after a brief training period.

The early motive researchers did not expect the implicit and self-report measures of motives to be related to each other, or to predict similar outcomes. Indeed, McClelland (1951) conceptualized personality as consisting of three major systems, traits, motives, and schemas, and he believed that self-report measures of motives actually belonged in the category of a schema. That is, the self-report motive measures reflected how people thought about themselves rather than how they naturally and spontaneously organized their thoughts in relation to goals and incentives. A critical early study demonstrated that the implicit and explicit measures of achievement motivation were uncorrelated and predicted to entirely different sets of outcomes (deCharms, Morrison, Reitman, & McClelland, 1955). Explicit achievement motivation was associated with being influenced by expert opinions whereas implicit achievement was associated with better performance on tasks that involved internalized standards of excellence. Many subsequent studies have confirmed that explicit and implicit motives predict to different outcomes (Koestner, Weinberger, & McClelland, 1991; Woike, Gershkovich, Piorkowski, & Polo, 1999).

Despite the early evidence that implicit and explicit motives were independent and could both contribute to explaining behavior, motivation research became dominated by questions regarding the psychometric credentials of the implicit

measures, repeated attempts to design valid self-report measures, and arguments about which type of measure displayed greater predictive validity.

This long-running implicit versus explicit debate was finally “resolved” in 1989 when McClelland restated his earlier view that it should be possible to build a more comprehensive theory of behavior by including *both* implicit and explicit measures of the three motives (McClelland, Koestner, & Weinberger, 1989). The following five central points were made:

1. Implicit and explicit motives represent different levels of personality and their measures will typically be uncorrelated with each other.
2. Implicit and explicit motives will each importantly influence behavior (and knowing about both of them is better than knowing about only one of them).
3. Implicit and explicit motives will predict different kinds of outcomes with implicit motives predicting spontaneous, self-initiated patterns of behavior over time whereas explicit motives predicting response tendencies in particular social situations.
4. Implicit and explicit motives are responsive to distinct sets of environmental stimuli (i.e., activity incentives such as challenge level for the implicit motive and social incentives such as whether a task is described as achievement-relevant for the explicit motive).
5. Implicit and explicit motives have distinct developmental histories with the key formative era for implicit motives being the first two years of life and the key era for explicit motives being middle childhood.

How is this history of implicit and explicit motives relevant to current work on self-esteem? We think there are three parallels for self-esteem research that have already become evident. First, one could have predicted that the implicit measures would come under attack because their psychometric qualities pale in comparison to those of self-report scales. (David McClelland was always dubious of the high reliability of self-report scales which he felt were based on asking redundant questions to participants who felt compelled to respond consistently.) Second, one could have predicted that many researchers would become discouraged by the fact that implicit and explicit measures were uncorrelated and predicted to different outcomes. (The absence of a positive correlation between self-report and implicit measures of the achievement motive was central to Entwisle’s (1972) influential critique of motive research.) Third, it could have been predicted that researchers would respond to this situation by spawning additional implicit and explicit measures.

What would someone schooled in the motive literature advise regarding future work on implicit and explicit self-esteem? The following four key points stand out:

1. Researchers should settle on the implicit measure that seems to have the best psychometric credentials (but recognize that no implicit measure will ever attain the same levels of reliability as explicit self-report scales).

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2. Researchers should be untroubled by the lack of relation between implicit and explicit measures.
3. Researchers should work to identify the class of outcomes that are uniquely associated with implicit and explicit self-esteem.
4. Researchers should outline the distinctive situational and developmental factors that impact on implicit and explicit self-esteem.

Above all, self-esteem researchers would do well to avoid becoming mired in a debate regarding which type of measure is better. Instead, they should celebrate the fact that self-esteem can be assessed at both an implicit and explicit level and be inspired to build a complex, multilevel theory of self-esteem that can take its place amidst other recent comprehensive, multilevel conceptualizations of personality (McAdams, 1995, 2001; Sheldon, 2004).

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13

Implicit and Explicit Self-Esteem: Theoretical and Methodological Refinements

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Self-esteem has been an integral concept in social psychological research since the writings of William James in 1890. *Explicit self-esteem* has been conceptualized as a conscious, reasoned self-evaluation of global self-worth and has been assessed traditionally using direct, self-report procedures (see Coopersmith, 1967; Rosenberg, 1965; Taladori & Swann, 2001). Research relying on *direct measures of self-esteem* has been fruitful, and a large body of knowledge has accumulated regarding the nature, function, and consequences of explicit self-esteem (see Baumeister, 1998; Brown, 1998; Leary & Baumeister, 2000; Sedikides & Stroebe, 1997). These measures have several important strengths that contribute to their frequent use, including their ease of administration and their excellent psychometric properties (Rosenberg, 1979).

Increasingly, however, there has been a growing awareness of the limitations of direct measures of self-esteem, with a focus on two main weaknesses. First, direct measures of self-esteem are susceptible to self-report and self-presentational biases. For example, explicit self-esteem, as assessed by direct measures, has been found to correlate with self-presentation, impression management, and self-deception (Lindeman & Verkasalo, 1995; Wells & Marwell, 1976). Second, because direct measures of self-esteem rely on a conscious, self-report of self-esteem, they are unable to capture aspects of individuals' self-beliefs that reside outside of conscious awareness (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). This omission is particularly problematic for clinical research, given that many of the dysfunctional self-attitudes and self-schemata thought to play a crucial role in the development of psychopathology are conceptualized as operating outside of conscious awareness (Beck, 1967; Clark, Beck, & Alfort, 1999; De Houwer, 2002).

ALTERNATIVE CONCEPTUALIZATIONS AND MEASURES OF SELF-ESTEEM

Researchers have hypothesized the existence of implicit self-esteem, or aspects of self-esteem that operate outside of conscious awareness and control (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). Theoretically, there has been some ambiguity regarding the definition of implicit self-esteem, which has derived, in part, from differences among the measures developed to assess this construct. We define *implicit self-esteem* as the strength of evaluative self-associations, which operate in a relatively automatic fashion, outside of conscious awareness (see also Dijksterhuis, 2004). *Association-based measures of self-esteem* directly assess the strength of these evaluative self-associations or the associations that are automatically activated by the self.

The literature on self-esteem measurement has focused on the distinction between direct and association-based measures. However, there is a third class of self-esteem measures that does not fit the definition of either direct or association-based measures. These *indirect measures of self-esteem* do not directly ask an individual for a conscious, self-report of self-esteem, nor do they directly measure automatic, evaluative self-associations. Indirect measures of self-esteem are hybrid measures that may assess implicit self-esteem, explicit self-esteem, or some combination of the two.

The precise definitions of explicit and implicit self-esteem and the measures designed to assess them will allow for greater precision in hypothesis testing and will provide a framework for classifying the growing body of self-esteem measures (see Figure 13.1). For example, there has been debate about the relationship between implicit and explicit self-esteem. Are they distinct theoretical constructs or are they just separate definitions of the same underlying self-esteem construct? Our model allows for a relationship between explicit and implicit self-esteem, as it seems unlikely that one's conscious evaluation of global self-worth is completely independent from one's automatic evaluative self-associations (see also Cunningham, Preacher, & Banaji, 2001). However, as a result of poorly defined theoretical constructs, blurred boundaries between association-based and indirect measures, and the use of measures with poor psychometric properties, the relationship between implicit and explicit self-esteem remains elusive. In order to test

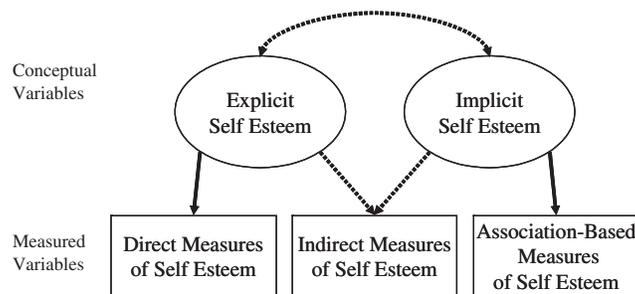


FIGURE 13.1 The relationship between conceptual and measured variables of self-esteem.

this and other theoretical research questions regarding implicit and explicit self-esteem, reliable and valid measures are necessary.

CURRENTLY USED ASSOCIATION-BASED AND INDIRECT MEASURES OF SELF-ESTEEM

Association-Based Measures

Social psychologists have developed a number of association-based measures of self-esteem, including variations of priming-based measures (Hetts, Sakuma, & Pelham, 1999; Spalding & Hardin, 2000) and the self-other Implicit Association Test (Greenwald & Farnham, 2000). These measures directly assess the automatic evaluative associations with the self.

Priming-based measures assess the evaluative information that is automatically activated by the self. In a typical priming paradigm, participants are presented with self-relevant stimuli (either subliminally or superliminally) followed by a positive or negative target word, which participants are instructed to categorize as quickly as possible. A priming-based measure of self-esteem assesses the extent to which self-stimuli facilitate or inhibit the identification of positive compared to negative stimuli. As is often the case with priming-based measures of attitudes, priming-based measures of self-esteem have typically displayed poor internal consistency and test-retest reliability (see Bosson, Swann, & Pennebaker, 2000). Poor psychometric properties and weak construct validity have likely contributed to the infrequent use of priming-based measures by self-esteem researchers.

The self-other IAT measures the relative strength of the positive and negative associations that a person has with the self compared with others. Among the association-based measures of self-esteem, only the self-other IAT has demonstrated adequate levels of reliability (Bosson et al., 2000). However, the self-other IAT is not a pure measure of *self*-associations; it assesses the relative strength of the positive and negative associations that a person has with the *self* and with others. A self-other IAT score reveals as much about the strength of one's other-associations as it does about one's self-associations (Karpinski, 2004a). Thus, there is a need for an association-based measure of self-esteem that assesses participants' *self*-associations, exclusively.

Indirect Measures

The most prominent indirect measure of self-esteem is the name-letter task, in which participants rate the degree that they like the letters of the alphabet. The name-letter effect measures the extent to which individuals like letters in their own name (particularly their initials) more than other people like those letters (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995; Koole, Dijksterhuis, & van Knippenberg, 2001; Nuttin, 1985, 1987). The tendency to prefer one's initials may be viewed as one instance of Thorndike's (1920) halo effect, in which the judgment of an attribute (in this case, initials) is influenced by the judgment of a seemingly irrelevant

attribute (the self). Psychometrically, the name-letter effect has yielded respectable findings, with modest internal consistency and stability over one month (Bosson et al., 2000; Koole et al., 2001). Given that the name-letter task does not directly measure self-associations, nor provide a direct, self-report measure of self-esteem, it is an indirect measure of self-esteem. The available evidence suggests that the name-letter task captures aspects of both implicit and explicit self-esteem. In general, responses on the name-letter task correlate more strongly with direct measures than with implicit measures of self-esteem (Bosson et al., 2000; Jones, Pelham, Mirenberg, & Hetts, 2002), suggesting that the name-letter effect may capture aspects of the explicit self-esteem construct. At the same time, the name-letter effect is affected by cognitive processes outside of conscious awareness and control (Koole et al., 2001), suggesting that it may also capture aspects of the implicit self-esteem construct. Nevertheless, important questions remain regarding the name-letter effect. First, how can the name-letter effect be measured more reliably, on par with direct measures of self-esteem? Second, to what degree is the name-letter effect influenced by implicit self-esteem, relative to explicit self-esteem?

Although the name-letter effect has desirable qualities as an indirect measure of self-esteem, the model we have presented (see Figure 13.1) suggests that no one measure of self-esteem is completely adequate. Self-esteem is a multi-faceted construct that requires many types of measures to fully capture its complexity. In the following sections, we review two recently developed measures that assess different aspects of self-esteem. First, the Single Category Association Test (SCAT; Karpinski & Steinman, 2005) is a modified version of the IAT that measures the strength of positive and negative associations with a single attitude object (the self, in this case), providing an *association-based measure* of self-esteem. Second, the Breadth-based Adjective Rating Task (BART; Karpinski, Versek, & Steinberg, 2004) capitalizes on a linguistic bias to indirectly assess expectations regarding the self. This latter technique yields an *indirect measure* of self-esteem.

THE SELF-SCAT AS AN ASSOCIATION-BASED MEASURE OF SELF-ESTEEM

Based on the conceptual definitions provided, an association-based measure of self-esteem ought to measure automatic evaluative associations with the self. Thus far, none of the reliable, commonly used measures of self-esteem fit this definition. The self-other IAT comes closest to this ideal, but evidence suggests that other-associations contaminate its measurement of *self*-associations (Karpinski, 2004a). The self-SCAT is a modified version of the IAT that was developed to measure self-associations, exclusively.

The self-SCAT is a two-stage task. In each stage, participants categorize target words as being good, bad, or self-related. The self-words used for this task include the participant's first and last name, as well as personal pronouns (I, me, myself). In the first stage, good words and self-words are categorized on one response key and bad words on a different key (self + good). In the second stage, bad words and

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self-words are categorized on one response key and good words on a different key (self + bad). The mean response latency for all target words in the self + good block is subtracted from the mean response latency for all target words in the self + bad block, providing a measure of the strength of individuals' evaluative associations with the self (for additional details, see Karpinski & Steinman, 2005).

In order for the self-SCAT to be of use, it must be a reliable measure of implicit self-esteem. To examine its reliability, we had 34 female participants complete a self-SCAT. Twenty-seven participants returned one week later and completed the measure again. The self-SCAT displayed excellent levels of internal consistency ($\alpha = .75$). In addition, the test-retest reliability of the self-SCAT was acceptable, although somewhat low, $r(26) = .54$. These data provide some preliminary evidence for the reliability of the self-SCAT.

Karpinski and Steinman (2004; Study 2) examined the relationships between the self-SCAT, a self-other IAT, and explicit measures of self-esteem. Overall, participants had high self-esteem on the explicit measures (values of $d \geq 1.35$), on the self-SCAT ($d = 1.13$), and on the self-other IAT ($d = 1.84$). We have speculated that explicit and implicit self-esteem are, at least, modestly correlated. Following this reasoning, if the self-SCAT is an improved measure of implicit self-esteem over the self-other IAT, then it should evidence stronger correlations with measures of explicit self-esteem, when compared to the self-other IAT. As predicted, the self-SCAT correlated significantly and positively with the explicit measure of self-esteem, $r(42) = .33$, $p = .04$, whereas the self-other IAT failed to correlate with the explicit measure of self-esteem, $r(42) = .07$, $p = .67$. Interestingly, self-SCAT and self-other IAT scores were uncorrelated, $r(50) = .19$, $p = .18$, providing indirect empirical support for the contaminating effect of other-associations on self-other IAT scores.

The self-SCAT was designed to measure the self-associations that constitute implicit self-esteem. Empirically, these findings provide some initial evidence that the self-SCAT has the reliability and validity necessary to be considered a viable, association-based measure of self-esteem.

THE SELF-BART AS AN INDIRECT MEASURE OF SELF-ESTEEM

One approach to indirectly measuring explicit self-esteem is to take advantage of the overlap between one's conscious self-evaluations and one's self-expectations. A task that assesses an individual's expectations about the self could be used as an indirect measure of his or her explicit self-evaluation. The self-BART was developed to reveal the same information as explicit measures of self-esteem, while being less affected by self-presentational concerns.

People tend to describe expectancy consistent information at a higher level of abstraction than expectancy inconsistent information (Maass, Milesi, Zabbini, & Stahlberg, 1995; Wigboldus, Semin, & Spears, 2000). The breadth of a trait adjective provides a measure of linguistic abstraction by quantifying the number of behaviors subsumed by that adjective (Hampson, John, & Goldberg, 1987). In

accordance with their tendency for positive self-expectations, high self-esteem individuals tend to describe themselves with broad positive and narrow negative traits. Conversely, low self-esteem individuals tend to describe themselves with narrow positive and broad negative traits (Karpinski, 2004b). The self-BART quantifies this expectancy bias. In this task, participants rate the degree to which 144 trait adjectives, known to vary by breadth and valence, are descriptive of them. An overall self-BART score is obtained by summing the ratings of the narrow positive and broad negative traits and subtracting this sum from the ratings of the broad positive and narrow negative traits (for additional details, see Karpinski et al., 2004). The self-BART provides an indirect measure of self-esteem by assessing the self-expectation revealed in participants' adjective use.

The results of the three studies provide initial support for the reliability and validity of the self-BART as an indirect measure of explicit self-esteem (Karpinski et al., 2004). First, the self-BART displayed reasonable levels of stability over time. Although the test-retest reliability of the self-BART over a 4-week interval ($r = .64$) was somewhat low in comparison to direct measures of explicit self-esteem, it was in the range of reliabilities typically observed for indirect and implicit measures of self-esteem (see Bosson et al., 2000). A second important indicator of the self-BART's validity is its relationship with direct measures of explicit self-esteem. As predicted, the self-BART correlated significantly and positively with a composite of three direct measures of self-esteem in two independent samples, $r(58) = .29, p = .02$ and $r(132) = .30, p < .01$. Third, an indirect measure of self-esteem ought to be less sensitive to self-presentational concerns than direct measures of explicit self-esteem. The Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding (BIDR; Paulhus, 1991) was included to assess participants' tendencies to present themselves favorably. As expected, whereas the self-BART was unrelated to BIDR scores, $r(132) = 0.04, p = .87$, a relatively strong positive relationship was observed between explicit measures of self-esteem and BIDR scores, $r(132) = 0.32, p < .01$. Finally, numerous studies have found a negative relationship between current levels of explicit self-esteem and depression (for example, see Roberts & Monroe, 1994). Thus, the self-BART ought to correlate with measures of depression. Supporting its validity, the self-BART showed the expected correlation with the Beck Depression Inventory [Beck, Ward, Mendelson, Mock, & Erbaugh (1961); $r(131) = -.22, p = .01$].

The self-BART was developed as an indirect measure of self-esteem. Again, research on this measure is in the early stages and there are many questions about the self-BART that have not been addressed. However, the results from the three studies reviewed provide support for the reliability and validity of the self-BART as a measure of self-esteem.

CONCLUSIONS

Since the quintessential review by Greenwald and Banaji (1995), researchers have acknowledged the need for alternatives to direct measures of explicit self-esteem. We have presented a framework for dividing measures of self-esteem into three

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categories: direct, indirect, and association-based. Based on the data we have reviewed, we can conclude that the self-SCAT has considerable potential as an association-based measure of self-esteem, and the self-BART and name-letter task are promising indirect measures of self-esteem.

Our analysis suggests that different measures of self-esteem may assess different aspects of the self-esteem construct. Given that multiple measures are necessary to capture the complexity of self-esteem, it is vital for researchers to continue developing new measures like the self-SCAT and the self-BART. With multiple measures assessing different aspects of self-esteem, we will likely discover that different measures are more or less useful depending on the situation. It is vital to ensure that measures of self-esteem have a strong theoretical foundation and are as reliable and valid as possible. Only then can theoretical models about implicit and explicit self-esteem be tested.

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14

Moral Value, Agency, and the Measurement of Self-Esteem

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When we ask others how much they value themselves, we are hoping to share a gaze into their private mental mirrors—the contents and color of their self-consciousness. Inferences about a person's self-esteem are therefore inferences about an intentional stance, or inner experience, that is expressed to us in the form of publicly observable behavior. To the canny observer, one's demeanor, preferences, decisions, written and spoken words, and other actions all betray a particular valuation of the self, although the connection is never certain. Measurement, or formal and theoretically grounded observation of self-esteem is no less inferential and no less contestable. Seen in this light, all measurement of self-esteem is *implicit*: The hidden subjectivity of another person is merely indicated or implied in their voluntary and involuntary behavior, be it utterances, scale ratings, response times, skin conductance, or cerebral blood flow. This recognition contrasts with the current penchant for describing as “implicit” only those measures that do not involve the person's awareness of the relation of the behavior to the attitude being measured (see Fazio & Olson, 2003).

The most direct indicators of self-esteem are avowals about oneself. The predicates that are linked to the symbolic representation of self in speech and writing, if sincere, give others a nuanced understanding of how we feel about ourselves. For example, when grunge musician Kurt Cobain described himself as a “miserable, self-destructive, death rocker” in his suicide note of 1994, he gave unequivocal voice to the self-loathing that both fueled his career and ensured its brevity. Heavyweight boxer Muhammad Ali's announcement to the world in 1962 of “I am the greatest!” left it equally clear how he felt about himself.

Measurement requires standardization, which is most easily accomplished in relation to avowals by relying on fixed questions rather than spontaneous statements. This has been the primary approach to self-esteem testing since the publication 56 years ago of the first self-esteem instrument (Raimy, 1948). Direct-question self-esteem measures require respondents to indicate the extent to which they agree with first- or second-person statements reflecting positive and

negative evaluative stances toward the self. Such statements may capture an overall stance (e.g., *I feel good about myself; You are unworthy*) or a more specific belief, attitude, or tendency assumed to be strongly associated with the overall stance (e.g., *You feel good about your appearance; I am an unworthy father; I really hate myself when I make mistakes at work*). Graded or categorical agreement is averaged across statements in a weighted or unweighted manner to form a single score or several domain-specific subscores (often hierarchically related). These scores are used as quantitative indices of self-esteem. Although scores created in this way are rare if ever confirmed as anything more than ordinal in metric meaning, they are treated as interval scales for purposes of statistical analysis. Popular examples include Rosenberg's (1965) Self-Esteem Scale (SES), Coopersmith's (1967) Self-Esteem Inventory, and Janis and Field's (1959) Feelings of Inadequacy Scale. Of these, the SES has been the most widely used in psychology and it continues to be the instrument preferred by most self-esteem researchers. The factor structure of the SES, however, alerts us that there are in fact two distinct forms of personal value that we all experience. These two forms are best understood as the fundamental axes or dimensions of self-esteem.

TWO-DIMENSIONAL SELF-ESTEEM

Morris Rosenberg designed the 10-item SES as a unidimensional Guttman scale with "contrived" or combined responses yielding a final 7-point scale. This economy fit with his view of the individual's "global self-esteem" as "a generally favorable or unfavorable, positive or negative, pro or con feeling toward himself as a whole." (1979, p. 21). However, when researchers switched to using the SES items with standard 5- or 7-point Likert rating scales and simply summing the 10 ratings, it became evident that at least two factors commingled within the ostensibly unidimensional measure. A review of these structural analyses, and their mixed results and interpretations, is beyond the scope of this brief chapter (see Tafarodi & Milne, 2002, for a detailed discussion). Our own interpretation of the findings, one supported by confirmatory factor analyses and tests of divergent predictive validity (e.g., Tafarodi & Milne, 2002; Tafarodi & Swann, 1995), is that SES items such as *I take a positive attitude toward myself* reflect a different type of valuation than do items such as *I am able to do things as well as most other people*. The first is founded on consideration of one's own moral significance, the second on the experience of personal power or efficacy. Both types of valuation are integral to global self-esteem, which consists of nothing more or less than their composite.

The two-dimensional approach to understanding and measuring self-esteem is premised on the duality of persons as social objects and agents. As social objects, we hold moral significance to ourselves and others; as agents, we exert influence upon the world according to our plans, and sometimes in spite of them. Moral consideration pertains to character or disposition and trades on discriminations of good and bad, credit and blame, virtue and vice, attraction and repulsion. When each of us look into the mirror, we see reflected back a *person*, not a thing. Only

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persons can serve as proper moral objects. However much we may like or dislike a cat, dog, or horse, and feel satisfied or dissatisfied with it, we cannot exalt or condemn it in the way we do ourselves and others. In those instances where we appear to do so, we are merely engaging in anthropomorphic projection.

The ability to apprehend ourselves as moral objects follows from the internalization of the perspective of the other, a developmental transition that splits our consciousness and endows us with the reflexive awareness that is the signal feature of the human mind. This cognitive achievement provides the basis for pride and shame, righteousness and guilt, self-satisfaction and self-criticism—all these being expressions of a full-fledged moral orientation toward oneself. To value ourselves means to take a moral stance toward ourselves and to see our attributes and actions as worthy or unworthy of the standards and ideals that we individually hold as good, right, and beautiful. What we are describing here is a thoroughly socialized conception of personal value. There is, however, more to self-esteem than that. We are more than mental microcosms of our societies. The difference lies in our agency, our capacity for willed action and the biologically rooted satisfaction that derives from it.

When we act upon the world with purpose, we do so out of desire. The ends of our desires are our goals, mundane and grandiose. At times, actions are their own goals, as is true for the child who idly flings stones into the sea with no target or particular consequence in mind. In such cases, the normal execution of the action carries its own reward—it is inherently gratifying. More typically, however, it is fulfillment of the intended goal that satisfies the desire and provides us with pleasure. Whether our intention was to scale Mount Everest, conquer the armies of a continent, or simply cross the street or stay awake at the wheel, the recognition that we did so is immediately satisfying. Of course, the pleasure may be too subtle and habitual to capture our attention in the case of especially mundane goals. The unmistakable joy of the youngster after her first bicycle ride without training wheels is as unmistakably absent in the 30-year-old bicycle courier who crisscrosses the city each day. This does not mean, however, that basic riding ability plays no role in sustaining the courier's normal sense of efficacy and competence. Take away these unremarkable and uncelebrated skills—through illness, accident, or old age—and the connection becomes painfully clear. How, then, does the subjective experience of agency relate to self-esteem?

Successful action or efficacy leaves a double imprint on self-consciousness. First, the primitive, visceral satisfaction of affecting the world according to one's intentions imbues our situational self-awareness with a positive tone that can be described variously as feeling strong, healthy, robust, effective, powerful, capable, and competent. The result is an immediate and relatively nonreflective inflation of the self. This initial inflation requires only a casual level of self-awareness, not a deeper consideration of the symbolic meaning of the action for one's identity. Upon further reflection, however, the moral significance of the action is taken into account, leaving a second, distinct imprint on self-consciousness in terms of the "goodness" or "badness" of the action and, by extension, the goodness or badness of oneself. This secondary elaboration, the moralization of the action, explains how the outcomes of our efforts come to

directly influence that part of personal value that is rooted in consideration of our character and social significance.

The initial imprint, involving the reflexive gratification of what White (1959) called “effectance” and its diffusion into self-awareness, qualifies as a separate source and form of self-esteem. This is the valuative representation of one’s own agency, which exists alongside the representation of one’s own moral quality. Elsewhere, one of us has referred to the first as *self-competence* and the second as *self-liking*. Together, they constitute what is typically understood as global or general self-esteem. Each dimension, considered as a personality trait, represents the synthetic abstraction of a lifetime of experience and action. In this sense, self-competence and self-liking are the twin valuative themes in our ongoing personal narrative. They reflect how strong and able we believe we are and where we think we stand in relation to the good. Clearly, the two themes are highly interdependent and therefore highly correlated. Competence easily takes on moral significance and accepting oneself as a good and worthy person has profound consequences for one’s engagement with the world and the development of abilities and skills. Even so, it is important to recognize and appreciate the essential duality of self-esteem. There are many instances of dissociation between the efficacy and moral significance of an act or a person. For example, the thrill of power that comes from successful wrongdoing is often followed by crushing regret and guilt, just as the inability to overcome a moral scruple when it is adaptive to do so may leave one feeling weak and inept yet pure of character. Similarly, we all know those who are conspicuous for their ability to adore themselves in spite of obvious and admitted incompetence, and those who despise themselves in spite of marvelous talents and achievements (Tafarodi, 1998; Tafarodi, Tam, & Milne, 2001).

MEASURING SELF-COMPETENCE AND SELF-LIKING

If we are to take seriously the above phenomenal analysis of personal value, we need to ensure that our instruments capture the duality of what we are aiming to measure. It is somewhat ironic that the most popular measure of global self-esteem, Rosenberg’s SES, appears to betray the intentions of its author by pointing to this very duality. This highlights the need to formally and explicitly distinguish between self-competence and self-liking in our measures. The separation will allow us to examine the unique and interactive associations of the two dimensions with variables of interest. This strategy will lead to more refined models of how self-esteem emerges and develops as an aspect of self-consciousness and how it influences our behavior. A decade ago, one of us and Bill Swann published the 20-item Self-Liking/Self-Competence Scale (Tafarodi & Swann, 1995) as an alternative to unidimensional measures such as the SES. Now available as a revised, 16-item version with improved psychometric properties (SLCS-R; Tafarodi & Swann, 2001), this instrument consists of simple first-person statements reflecting high and low self-competence (e.g., *I am highly effective at the things I do; I wish I were more skillful in my activities*)

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and self-liking (e.g., *I am secure in my sense of self-worth; I do not have enough respect for myself*). Respondents indicate their agreement with the statements using a 5-point Likert rating scale. Ratings are then summed to produce separate self-competence and self-liking scores. The scores are moderately correlated ($r = .58$), consistent with the theoretical interdependence of the two dimensions. Despite this overlap, divergent patterns of *unique* relations have been found for the two dimensions in relation to memory (Tafarodi, Marshall, & Milne, 2003), negative life events (Tafarodi & Milne, 2002), word recognition (Tafarodi & Milne, 2002), and cultural comparisons (Tafarodi, Lang, & Smith, 1999; Tafarodi & Swann, 1996; Tafarodi & Walters, 1999). These findings illustrate the heuristic advantage of distinguishing self-competence and self-liking in theory and measurement. Notably, the two dimensions account for virtually all the true-score variance of the SES ($R^2 = .83$, uncorrected for reliability), *with each dimension independently accounting for a sizable share* (Tafarodi & Milne, 2002). This pattern reinforces our claim that the SES is measuring two different aspects of self-esteem.

One apparent drawback of the SLCS-R is its reliance on direct statements about competence and efficacy to index self-competence. Admittedly, the belief in one's ability to exercise control over the environment, referred to by Bandura (1989, 1992) as *self-efficacy*, is not itself an experience of personal value or self-esteem. In its generalized form, self-efficacy refers to "what we can do" on the whole, whereas self-esteem refers to "what we are" on the whole. However, the same successful efforts and outcomes that increase self-efficacy over time also amplify our sense of personal value by causing us to experience ourselves as strong and capable agents. Thus, self-efficacy and self-competence are best understood as psychologically distinct concomitants of willfully engaging with the world. That said, it is clear that many of the SLCS-R self-competence items refer to what one can do rather than what one is. The justifying assumption is that the correlation of generalized self-efficacy and self-competence is high enough to allow test indicators of the former to serve as indicators of the latter. This assumption is consistent with demonstrations of the high redundancy of the two types of indicators in the context of measurement (Bernard, Hutchison, Lavin, & Pennington, 1996; Stanley & Murphy, 1997).

We began by recognizing that all measures of self-esteem are at most implicit of the individual's private symbolic experience, which can only be inferred from observed behavior. Nonetheless, disenchantment with self-report methods has given sway over the past decade to both measures of self-esteem identified as "implicit" because they circumvent awareness of what is being measured and a new *construct* of personal value referred to as "implicit self-esteem." The latter was defined by Greenwald and Banaji (1995) as "the introspectively unidentified (or inaccurately identified) effect of the self-attitude on evaluation of self-associated and self-dissociated objects" (p. 11). Elsewhere, it is defined with greater economy as "the association of the concept of self with a valence attribute" (Greenwald, Banaji, Rudman, Farnham, Nosek, & Mellott, 2002, p. 5). These definitions are notable in that they divest self-esteem of its experiential content, reducing it to a semantic association or theoretical relation in a process

model. To distinguish self-esteem as a conscious, reflexive stance from its implicit counterpart, Farnham, Greenwald, and Banaji (1999) describe the latter as a “construct of self-regard” that is “unavailable to introspection” (p. 244). Consistent with this separation, Greenwald and Farnham (2000) claim that measures of implicit self-esteem “define constructs that are distinct from, although correlated with, nominally the same constructs measured by self-report” (p. 1034). A fair discussion of the interpretive difficulties presented by these claims would lead us off the main path of this chapter. It is enough for the present purposes to point out that any argument for “implicit” self-competence or self-liking as holistic abstractions formed outside of conscious experience or sequestered beyond the reach of awareness is implausible in light of their theoretical origins. Both dimensions of self-esteem are the result of ongoing synthetic interpretation that renders complex configurations of evaluative thought and feeling meaningful within a unified narrative identity. Integrative self-symbolic activity of this sort can occur only within the field of self-consciousness. If we doubt the validity of people’s responses to our questioning of what they see in the mirrors of their own minds, we should try convincing them to look closer and answer with greater care and honesty. Reinventing self-esteem as an alienated and unrecognizable intervening variable is not the solution.

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