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Development and Validation of the Situational Self-Awareness Scale

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This article discusses the manipulation and measurement of levels of situational self-focus, which is generally labeled ''self-awareness.'' A new scale was developed to quantify levels of public and private self-awareness. Five studies were conducted to assess the psychometric properties, reliability, and validity of the Situational Self-Awareness Scale (SSAS). The SSAS was found to have a reliable factor structure, to detect differences in public and private self-awareness produced by laboratory manipulations, and to be sensitive to changes in self-awareness within individuals over time and across situations. The SSAS can be used as a manipulation check of laboratory self-awareness manipulations and as a means of assessing naturally occurring fluctuations in public and private self-awareness in order to clarify the relation between self-awareness and other variables (e.g., mood and memory). © 2001 Academic Press

Key Words: public self-awareness; private self-awareness.

Humans have the ability to shift the focus of their attention from their environment to themselves and vice versa (Cooley, 1902; Duval & Wicklund, 1972; Mead, 1934). Human self-focus, it is generally agreed, has both a public and a private dimension (e.g., Buss, 1980; Davis & Franzoi, 1999; Fenigstein, Scheier, & Buss, 1975; Franzoi & Brewer, 1984). Public self-focus is characterized by attentiveness to those features of one's self that are presented to others (e.g., physical features and mannerisms). Private self-focus involves attentiveness to the internal, personal aspects of one's self such as memories and feelings of physical pleasure or pain (Buss, 1980).

Self-focus, whether public or private, can be dispositional or situational. Dispositional self-focus is often referred to as ''self-consciousness,'' whereas situational self-focus is labeled ''self-awareness'' (Fenigstein et al., 1975). Thus, public and private self-consciousness are assumed to be relatively stable traits or elements of one's personality (Buss & Scheier, 1976; Carver & Glass, 1976). In contrast, public and private self-awareness are thought to be transient states that are susceptible to manipulation (Carver & Glass, 1976). For example, public self-awareness can be induced in the laboratory by exposing participants to a full-length mirror (e.g., Webb, Marsh, Schneiderman, & Davis, 1989, Experiment 4) or a video camera (e.g., Alden, Teschuk, & Tee, 1992). Private self-awareness can be induced by instructions to focus on personal thoughts and feelings (e.g., Webb et al., 1989, Experiment 3) or

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by exposing participants to a small mirror that reveals only the participant's head and shoulders (e.g., Govern & Marsch, 1997).

The traits of public and private self-consciousness are usually quantified using the public and private subscales of the Self-Consciousness Scale (SCS) developed by Fenigstein et al. in 1975. This scale has been demonstrated to be relatively reliable (Fenigstein et al., 1975), to have both discriminant and convergent validity (Carver & Glass, 1976; Turner, Scheier, Carver & Ickes, 1978), and to be applicable to a variety of cultures (Heinemann, 1979; Vleeming & Englese, 1981; Nystedt & Smari, 1989; Shek, 1994).[1]

Unfortunately, no comparable index exists that reliably distinguishes between states of public and private self-awareness. This presents a dilemma for researchers who study the effects of self-awareness manipulations. Sometimes no direct manipulation check is used (e.g., Baldwin & Holmes, 1987, Experiment 1; Gibbons & Wicklund, 1982, Experiment 1; Govern & Marsch, 1997; Scheier & Carver, 1980). In such cases, researchers generally infer that the manipulation was successful based on participants' behavior on an outcome variable that is theoretically influenced by public or private self-awareness. Other researchers have employed nonspecific self-focus manipulation checks such as the number of first-person pronouns used (e.g., Davis & Brock, 1975; Wegner & Guiliano, 1980), Exner's (1973) Self-Focus Sentence Completion scale (e.g., Carver & Scheier, 1978; Kimble, Hirt, & Arnold, 1985), or a structured interview to measure self-focus (e.g., Alden et al., 1992). Although these procedures can detect general self-focus, none of them has been reported to distinguish between states of public and private self-awareness.

The ability to differentiate between public and private self-awareness is important because the psychological underpinnings and behavioral effects of these two states are unique (e.g., Buss, 1980; Froming, Walker, & Lopyan, 1982). Buss (1980) theorized that a state of private self-awareness serves to clarify and intensify whatever affect, motives, or personal standards are currently salient to the individual. Thus, the private aspects of one's self (e.g., values and current mood) become magnified, and one's behavior is likely to reflect the increased attention to these factors. In contrast, individuals in a state of public self-awareness generally experience some level of discomfort and evaluation apprehension because they see themselves as the subject of others' appraisal. In order to reduce this negative state, they may attempt to modify their behavior to meet the perceived expectations of others, even if this behavior is not consistent with their internal standards.

Froming, Walker, and Lopyan (1982) provided empirical support for Buss's contention that states of public and private self-awareness have unique effects on behavior. Specifically, Froming et al. used a mirror to induce private self-awareness and an audience to induce public self-awareness in participant ''teachers'' who were instructed to shock confederate ''learners'' when the confederates provided wrong answers. All participants indicated (on a previously administered questionnaire) that

[1] However, it has been reported that the Private Self-Consciousness Subscale may actually consist of two closely related factors labeled ''Self-Reflectiveness'' and ''Internal State Awareness'' (Burnkrant & Page, 1984; Mittal & Balasubramanian, 1987; Trapnell & Campbell, 1999). This development, and its implications for the validity of the scale reported here, is addressed under General Discussion.

they believed themselves to be less accepting of the use of punishment as a learning tool than was the average person. Participants who were publicly self-aware provided more intense shocks than did control participants who, in turn, provided more intense shocks than did participants in a state of private self-awareness. Froming et al. reasoned that the privately self-aware participants administered low intensity shocks because they were focused on their own internal standards regarding the use of punishment (i.e., opposition to its use). Conversely, the publicly self-aware participants shocked at a higher level because they were influenced by their perceptions of the audience's beliefs about punishment (i.e., greater acceptance of its use).

Despite the theoretical and empirical value of an instrument that can reliably distinguish between states of public and private self-awareness, none currently exists. Five studies were conducted in order to develop and validate such an instrument. In the first two studies, factor analytic procedures were employed to develop a scale sensitive to changes in public and private self-awareness. This instrument, the Situational Self-Awareness Scale (SSAS), was used to cross-validate four common laboratory methods of public and private self-awareness induction in the third study. In the fourth and fifth studies, the reliability of the public and private subscales of the SSAS and SCS was assessed within individuals across time and situations. This was done to investigate the situational sensitivity of the SSAS relative to the SCS.

GENERAL METHOD

Participants in all five studies were undergraduate students who ranged in age from 18 to 53, the majority of whom received class credit in exchange for their participation. There were no significant gender differences in any of the studies, so all results were collapsed across gender.

STUDY 1

Participants

Participants were 213 undergraduates (145 females and 68 males) enrolled at Towson University. Participants completed the study in groups of 5–20.

Materials and Procedure

A series of 31 items was constructed in order to measure the public and private aspects of self-awareness (Buss, 1980). Because attention is often focused on something other than one's self, items that measured non-self-focus (e.g., focus on physical surroundings) were also included. The items were phrased as declarative sentences (e.g., ''Right now I am aware of my innermost thoughts''). Each item was accompanied by a 7-point scale, which ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree)* to 7 (*strongly agree*). Some of the statements were modified versions of items found in the public and private subscales of the Self-Consciousness Scale (SCS). To emphasize the situational nature of the items, the following instructions were given: ''Please respond to each statement based on how you feel RIGHT NOW, AT THIS INSTANT—not how you feel in general, or at this point in your life. Place an 'X' on the line above

TABLE 1
Items and Factor Loadings of the Situational Self-Awareness Scale

Item	Primary factor	Factor loading	
		Study 1	Study 2
1. Right now, I am keenly aware of everything in my environment.	Surroundings	.59	.81
2. Right now, I am conscious of my inner feelings.	Private	.75	.68
3. Right now, I am concerned about the way I present myself.	Public	.73	.80
4. Right now, I am self-conscious about the way I look.	Public	.71	.88
5. Right now, I am conscious of what is going on around me.	Surroundings	.68	.75
6. Right now, I am reflective about my life.	Private	.71	.76
7. Right now, I am concerned about what other people think of me.	Public	.73	.85
8. Right now, I am aware of my innermost thoughts.	Private	.76	.84
9. Right now, I am conscious of all objects around me.	Surroundings	.79	.78

Note. $N = 213$ (Study 1) and $N = 383$ (Study 2). Each item loaded below .40 on the two factors other than its primary factor.

the number that corresponds to your answer. There are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers—just be honest.''

Results and Discussion

A Principal Components Analysis with varimax rotation reduced the 31 items to three factors, which accounted for 44% of the variance in the data. These factors were labeled ''public self-awareness,'' ''private self-awareness,'' and ''awareness of immediate surroundings.''

The three items that loaded highest on each factor (and did not load above .40 on any other factor) were selected to form one 9-item Situational Self-Awareness Scale (SSAS). We selected only three items per factor because situational self-awareness is, by definition, highly transitory. A longer instrument, on which participants respond to many self-related items, could serve to induce situational self-awareness (e.g., Osberg, 1985). Inventory items and factor loadings are presented in Table 1.

STUDY 2

Participants

Participants were 383 undergraduates (242 females and 141 males) enrolled at Towson University and Rowan University.

Procedure

Participants completed the study in groups of 14–20. The instructions to participants were the same as those used in Study 1.

TABLE 2
SSAS Subscale Descriptive Statistics

Subscale	*M*	*SD*	Minimum	Maximum	α
Public	12.38	4.77	3.0	21.0	.82
Private	14.12	4.05	4.0	21.0	.70
Surroundings	14.13	3.57	5.0	21.0	.72

	Intercorrelations		
	Public	Private	Surroundings
Public	—		
Private	.31	—	
Surroundings	.19	.39	—

Note. $N = 383$ for all statistics. All correlations were significant at $p < .001$.

Results and Discussion

In order to examine the factor structure of the new 9-item SSAS, a principal components analysis with varimax rotation was performed on the data.

Intercorrelations between the nine items were all positive and ranged from .02 to .65 [mean interitem correlation = .28; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, χ^2 (36, $N = 383$) = 1068.1, $p < .0001$]. Three factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 emerged in the analysis, and the scree plot of eigenvalues flattened after three factors. Together the three factors accounted for 68% of the available variance. As can be seen in Table 1, these factors were the same as those in Study 1 (i.e., Public Self-Awareness, Private Self-Awareness, and Awareness of Immediate Surroundings).

Means and standard deviations of scores for the three factors are presented in Table 2. These scores were obtained by summing the values for the three items in each factor. Intercorrelations between the three factors range from .19 to .39, indicating that they are reasonably independent of one another (see Table 2). The internal consistency of each factor was assessed via Chronbach's alpha. The αs were .82 (Public), .70 (Private), and .72 (Immediate Surroundings). These are acceptable levels (Nunnally, 1978), especially when one considers that each subscale comprises only three items.

Studies 1 and 2 demonstrate that the SSAS is psychometrically sound. However, the sensitivity of the SSAS to changes in situational self-awareness has not been demonstrated. Three studies were conducted to address this issue.

STUDY 3

In order to evaluate the situational sensitivity of the SSAS, participants completed it under one of five laboratory conditions designed to manipulate levels of self-awareness (Buss, 1980). Two of the experimental conditions were intended to induce public self-awareness, two conditions were designed to induce private self-awareness, and one condition was a no-manipulation control. It was expected that participants exposed to the public self-awareness manipulations would score higher than participants in the other three conditions on the Public subscale of the SSAS. Similarly, participants in the private self-awareness manipulation conditions were

expected to score higher than participants in the other conditions on the Private subscale of the SSAS.

Participants

In this study, 184 Towson University undergraduate participants were randomly assigned to one of five experimental conditions. Data from 4 participants were excluded because of low proficiency in English (1 female), failure to correctly follow directions (1 female and 1 male), and suspicion about the video camera (1 female). Data from the remaining 180 participants ($n = 18$ males and 18 females per condition) were analyzed. All participants were tested while seated alone in a lab room.

Materials and Procedure

Participants were given an envelope containing the SSAS as well as several filler questionnaires (the SSAS was presented first). They were instructed to open the envelope and complete the questionnaires after the experimenter had left the room. Participants did so under one of the following conditions: (1) seated in front of a small mirror (18.5 × 23.5 cm), (2) after guided recall of a personal episodic memory, (3) seated in front of a full-length mirror (74 × 107 cm), (4) seated in front of a video camera, or (5) in a no-manipulation control condition. According to Buss (1980), the small mirror and guided personal memory recall conditions should induce private self-awareness; the large mirror and video camera conditions should induce public self-awareness. These techniques have been reported to successfully induce situational public or private self-awareness based on participants' behavior on an outcome variable that is related to self-awareness (e.g., Alden et al., 1992; Govern & Marsch, 1997; Webb et al., 1989).

Participants in the two mirror conditions were seated in the only available chair in the room. This chair faced a mirror, which was tagged with a card that read ''Save for Experiment 27.'' The experimenter did not mention the mirror unless the participant referred to it. If this occurred, the experimenter said ''I'm sorry for the clutter in the room, but someone else was kind enough to let me use their laboratory. I really shouldn't move things around in here because they aren't mine.'' In the large mirror condition, participants were seated in an open-front classroom desk so that their entire body was visible in the mirror. In the small mirror condition, participants were seated in a cubicle with the mirror placed at eye level on the back wall. Participants sat in front of the mirror for 1 min while the experimenter left the room to get the questionnaires. Upon returning, the experimenter explained that the questionnaires ''were designed to measure how people process information in everyday situations.'' The experimenter gave the envelope containing the questionnaires to the participant and then left the room.

In the video camera condition, participants saw the video camera on a tripod as they entered the lab room. They were asked to consent to have their participation videotaped so that the tape could be shown later in their psychology class ''to let other students know what it might be like to participate in a psychology study.'' All participants agreed to do so. Participants sat in front of the camera for 1 min while

TABLE 3
Means and Standard Deviations of SSAS Subscales as a Function of Self-Awareness Induction Condition

	Induction condition				
		Public self-awareness		Private self-awareness	
Subscale	Control	Large mirror	Video camera	Small mirror	Guided recall
Public	12.21	**13.86**	**14.52**	13.20	12.21
	(5.49)	(5.31)	(4.41)	(4.47)	(5.43)
Private	11.94	13.74	12.48	**14.04**	**15.18**
	(4.80)	(3.06)	(4.20)	(4.08)	(3.42)
Surroundings	12.78	14.58	13.95	13.86	15.12
	(3.33)	(2.88)	(3.54)	(3.69)	(3.87)

Note. $N = 36$ per condition. Higher numbers represent greater levels of self-awareness. Standard deviations appear in parentheses below means. Focused contrasts revealed that means in bold differed from the other three means in the row ($p < .05$).

the experimenter left the room to get the questionnaires. The experimenter gave the envelope containing the questionnaires to the participant and then left the room.

In the guided memory condition, participants were told that the study was concerned with factors that affect memory recall. They were asked to recall a recent event and to follow a set of instructions designed to help them recall the event more vividly. In order to enhance private self-awareness, participants were instructed not to tell the experimenter anything about the memory. Participants were given the envelope containing the questionnaires. They were then asked to close their eyes and listen to a set of instructions, which were audiotaped with a 10 s interval between phrases. The experimenter turned on the tape recorder, which contained the following instructions developed by Wright and Mischel (1982), and left the room: ''Imagine the situation as vividly as you can. Picture the events happening to you. See all the details of the situation. Picture in your 'mind's eye' the surroundings as clearly as possible. See the people or the objects. Hear the sounds. Experience the event happening to you. Think the thoughts you would actually think in this situation.''

The final instruction on the tape was: ''Please open your eyes and complete the questionnaires.''

In the control condition, participants completed the questionnaires after having been seated in the room by themselves for 1 min. This delay was included to equalize the amount of time spent in each condition.

Results and Discussion

Scores on the three items of each subscale of the SSAS were summed to provide one score for each subscale. Means and standard deviations of reported levels of self-awareness as a function of induction condition are presented in Table 3. Planned comparisons indicate that, as hypothesized, participants in the small mirror and the

memory recall conditions reported significantly higher scores on the private self-awareness subscale of the SSAS than did participants in the other three conditions: $F(1, 175) = 9.84$, $p = .002$, $r = .23$. Participants in the small mirror and memory recall conditions did not differ from one another with respect to private self-awareness: $F(1, 175) = 1.56$, $p = .21$, $r = .09$. Participants in the large mirror and video camera conditions did not differ from control participants with respect to private self-awareness: $F(1, 175) = 2.09$, $p = .15$, $r = .11$.

As hypothesized, participants in the large mirror and video camera conditions reported significantly higher scores on the public self-awareness subscale than did participants in the remaining three conditions: $F(1, 175) = 4.61$, $p = .03$, $r = .16$. Participants in the large mirror and video camera conditions did not differ from one another with respect to public self-awareness: $F(1, 175) < 1$, $p > .50$, $r = .02$. Participants in the small mirror and memory recall conditions did not differ from controls with respect to public self-awareness: $F(1, 175) < 1$, $p > .50$, $r = .04$. Because no specific hypothesis was made regarding the effect of the self-awareness inducers on the ''awareness of immediate surroundings'' subscale, an omnibus ANOVA was used to analyze these data. This analysis was not significant: $F(4, 175) = 2.29$, $p = .062$, $\eta = .22$.

These results indicate that differences in situational self-awareness produced by laboratory manipulations can be detected by the SSAS. These findings also serve to validate the use of four common methods of laboratory self-awareness induction. However, the ability of the SSAS to detect naturally occurring changes in self-awareness has not yet been demonstrated. Two studies were conducted to address this issue.

Studies 4 and 5 were conducted to assess the sensitivity of the SSAS to changes in self-awareness in the same individuals over time and across common social situations. In Study 4, participants were asked to complete the SSAS and the SCS once in a group setting (which should increase public self-awareness) and once while alone in their domicile (which should increase private self-awareness). There was a 2-week interval between testing sessions. Because the SCS measures dispositional self-consciousness and the SSAS quantifies situational self-awareness, it was expected that the SSAS would be more sensitive than the SCS to the changes in self-awareness produced by these two different situations. In Study 5, participants completed the SSAS and the SCS in the same group setting after a 2-week interval had elapsed. It was expected that scores on the SSAS subscales would be much more consistent over time in Study 5 (same situation) than they were in Study 4 (different situations).

STUDY 4

Participants

In Study 4, 69 Towson University undergraduates (52 females and 17 males) participated. Data from three participants (1 female and 2 males) were unusable because they did not return the follow-up questionnaires. Thus, data from 66 participants were analyzed.

TABLE 4
Subscale Reliability of the SSAS and SCS as a Function of Similarity of Testing Conditions

Subscale reliability	Study 4: Different situations	Study 5: Same situation
SSAS		
Public	.34*	.78*
Private	.23	.58*
Surroundings	.16	.60*
SCS		
Public	.74*	.91*
Private	.62*	.77*
Social anxiety	.64*	.72*

Note. Values in this table are correlation coefficients. There was a 2-week interval between testing situations in both studies.
$N = 66$ in Study 4 and $N = 44$ in Study 5.
*$p < .05$.

Procedure

Half of the participants ($n = 33$) completed the SSAS and the SCS (in counterbalanced order) in a classroom setting, with 18–25 other people around them. After 2 weeks had elapsed, each participant was given a sealed envelope containing the same two scales (presented in counterbalanced order). Participants were instructed to complete the scales later that day *while alone* in their home or dormitory room and to return the completed items within 1 week. The other half of the participants completed the scales in their domicile first and in the group setting 2 weeks later.

These two situations were thought to be a fair test of the sensitivity of the SSAS because it has been found that being alone increases private self-awareness, whereas being with others increases public self-awareness (Franzoi & Brewer, 1984). It was expected that SSAS scores would be more affected by the change in testing situations than would the SCS scores.

Results and Discussion

Subscale scores from each participant in the classroom setting (Time 1) were correlated with subscale scores in the domicile setting (Time 2). As predicted, the relevant subscales of the SCS (range of *r*: +.62 to +.74) were more consistent across situations than were the subscales of the SSAS (range of *r*: +.16 to +.34). Results are presented in Table 4.

STUDY 5

Participants

Participants were 48 undergraduate at Towson University. Data from 4 participants (2 males and 2 females) were omitted because they were not present for the second testing session. Thus, data from 44 participants (29 females and 15 males) were analyzed.

Procedure

The fifth study was essentially a replication of Study 4 with the exception that the participants completed the SCS and the SSAS as a group in the same classroom setting on both occasions. The scales were presented in counterbalanced order on both occasions, and the time interval between the two testing situations was 2 weeks. It was expected that keeping the situation constant would increase the magnitude of the correlations across time for both scales (relative to those in Study 4). However, scores on the SCS were still expected to be more consistent than those on the SSAS.

Results and Discussion

Subscale scores from each participant in the classroom setting at Time 1 were correlated with responses from that participant in the classroom setting at Time 2. These correlations are presented in Table 4. As expected, the subscale correlations for both inventories increased, relative to Study 4 (SCS range of r: +.72 to +.91; SSAS range of r: +.58 to +.60).

The change in correlation between Study 4 and Study 5 for the public and private subscales of each inventory was assessed via a Z test (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1991). The correlation between Public SSAS subscales across time in the same situation (r = +.78 in Study 5) was significantly greater than it was across situations (r = +.34 in Study 4): $Z = 3.44$, $p = .002$. Similarly, the correlation between Private SSAS subscales across time in the same situation (r = +.58 in Study 5) was significantly greater than it was across situations (r = +.23 in Study 4): $Z = 2.13$, $p = .03$.

Interestingly, the subscale correlations from the SCS within situations (Study 5) were also higher than those obtained across situations (Study 4). However, only the Public Self-Consciousness Subscale was significantly larger in Study 5 (r = +.74) than it was in Study 4 (r = +.91): $Z = 2.88$, $p = .004$. The change in the reliability of the Private Self-Consciousness Subscale from Study 4 (r = .62) to Study 5 (r = .77) was not significant: $Z = .56$, $p = .58$.

Together, the results of Studies 4 and 5 indicate that the SSAS is sensitive to fluctuations in situational self-awareness that occur within individuals over time and across situations. Scores on the SCS are also affected by these factors, but to a lesser degree.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The Situational Self-Awareness Scale was designed to quantify levels of public and private self-awareness. Data from Studies 1 and 2 demonstrate that the SSAS possesses a reliable factor structure that is consistent with the theoretical underpinnings of these two constructs. The results of Study 3 suggest that the SSAS can effectively distinguish between induced states of public and private self-awareness. In addition, the results of Study 3 cross-validate the use of four popular methods of inducing public and private self-awareness in the laboratory. Specifically, scores on the SSAS indicate that use of a small mirror or guided memory recall can induce private self-awareness, with neither induction procedure having a functional advan-

tage over the other. Similarly, public self-awareness was induced equally well via exposure to a large mirror or a video camera.

Studies 4 and 5 examined the situational sensitivity of the SSAS and the Self-Consciousness Scale developed by Fenigstein, Scheier, and Buss (1975). In Study 4, the SCS displayed greater consistency across situations than did the SSAS. This indicates that the SSAS is more sensitive to situational changes than is the SCS. In the fifth study, when the scales were completed in the same situation after a 2-week interval, scores on the SCS were, once again, more reliable than were scores on the SSAS, although the correlations across time increased (relative to those in Study 4) for both scales. As expected, the reliability of the SSAS increased significantly when the two testing situations were the same (Study 5) relative to when the scales were completed in different situations (Study 4). Thus, the SSAS appears to be sensitive to changes in levels of public and private self-awareness within individuals that are brought about by situational factors.

It is interesting to note that the reliability of the public and private subscales of the SCS was also higher in Study 5 (same situations) than in Study 4 (different situations), although the difference was statistically significant ($p < .05$) only for the public subscale. This finding suggests that the subscales of the SCS may be sensitive to situational factors as well as dispositional ones. The enhanced reliability of the SCS subscales in same-situation testing conditions also supports the argument that the SCS measures both frequency of self-consciousness and the motives for doing so (Trapnell & Campbell, 1999) to the extent that those motives are influenced by the situation.

Trapnell and Campbell (1999) argue that the different motives for self-focus may explain why the private subscale of the SCS has been reported to contain two distinct factors, which have been labeled ''Internal State Awareness'' and ''Self-Reflectiveness'' (Mittal & Balasubramanian, 1987; Piliavin & Charng, 1988). Although there is mounting evidence that the SCS is more complex than previously thought, we argue that this issue does not bear on the validity of the SSAS for several reasons. First, the issue of motive behind chronic self-focus is very difficult to discern. However, at the situational level, the motive to focus on one's self is often clearly supplied by a stimulus in the environment (e.g., a mirror or video camera). This is especially true in laboratory experiments where self-awareness manipulations are employed. Furthermore, the SSAS taps only whether a person is in a state of self-awareness at a given point in time; why the person is self-aware (be it due to a chronic tendency to do so or to a laboratory instruction) is often immaterial, given the highly transitory nature of self-awareness. Finally, Trapnell and Campbell (1999) have cogently argued that there is generally enough common variance in the Internal State Awareness and Self-Reflectiveness factors of the SCS to justify interpretation of their combined scores as a global index of private self-consciousness. Thus, the complexity of the private subscale of the SCS appears to be due to its being designed to measure dispositional, rather than situational, self-focus.

In this article, we report the development of an instrument that is sensitive to the specific characteristics of situational self-awareness and subsequently demonstrate its applicability to the experimental laboratory. The results of five studies support the use of this instrument, the Situational Self-Awareness Scale, as a valid, reliable,

and efficient means of quantifying situational fluctuations in both public and private self-awareness. The SSAS should prove useful in the study of self-awareness and, more generally, in testing theories that postulate self-focus as a mediating or moderating variable.

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