

論文題目 Positive Emotion Experiences in Negative Contexts

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学位論文の要約

Chapter 1 (Introduction): The experience of positive emotions has many benefits, especially in building resilience and overcoming difficult situations in life. However, given the variety of positive emotions, we are interested in examining which positive emotions would be appropriate and effective for one's current circumstances. In Chapter 1, we discuss our rationale, purposes and theoretical underpinnings of our study of emotion experience in negative contexts. We first introduce the four main approaches (sociodynamic, appraisal, construction and evolutionary) to understanding emotion, and highlight the commonalities between these approaches regarding the influence of context on emotional experience. We then build on the process model of emotion regulation to elucidate the stages of emotion experiences and how individuals could be motivated towards intentional emotional regulation. We focus attention on emotion goal setting as a lesser studied part of the emotional regulatory process, and highlight how comparing the ease of experience of positive emotions can contribute to more informed goal setting for individuals. Unlike past research, the current dissertation is novel in considering prior (negative) emotions as the context for emotion experience.

Chapter 2: We first uncover naturalistic associations of positive emotions and negative sentiments on social media (N = 3165787), to identify the cooccurrences of positive-negative pairs of emotions as an indication of their natural suitability. There may be pre-existing positive-negative combinations of affect which may occur naturally in real-life but would not have been highlighted by traditional methods of dimensional classification such as through appraisals. Hence, we used natural language processing methods to determine the content and semantic closeness of these emotional constructs. We extracted tweets related to a variety of specific positive emotion words (Amused, Awe, Compassion, Content, Excited, Gratitude, Happy, Hope, Moved, Neutral). Sentiment analysis using the LIWC dictionary was used to identify negative (sad, anxious, angry) sentiment in each tweet. Subsequent Cochran Q tests and Word2Vec modeling revealed the relative prevalence of negative contexts for each positive emotion category. Exploratory topic analyses were also run to qualitatively examine which topics best correspond to the specific positive emotion tweets. We found that in general, most positive emotions were related to angry sentiment, possibly due to arousal similarities and the use of social media for anger expression. However, there were notable exceptions such as for gratitude, hope and feeling moved, which were most associated with sad sentiment. Differential pairings of positive-negative emotions may be driven by various mechanisms, such as arousal, situational similarity or ongoing goals.

Chapter 3: We further explored the feasibility of switching between emotion experiences during motivated emotion regulation, in two studies (N = 1306). We introduced the novel concept

of ease of experience, to describe how easily one might experience an emotion without much effort or difficulty, relatively quickly, whenever they want to. In Study 1, we first examine lay beliefs of the ease of experiencing emotions (ease) through a series of self-report questionnaires conducted in two cultures, the US and Japan. We measured both general ease of emotional experience, and also ease in specific negative contexts, namely sad, angry and anxious situations. The findings revealed that there were significant differences in ease of experiencing positive emotions in negative contexts. In particular, though happiness may be as frequently experienced by participants compared to most other positive emotions, it may not be as easily experienced (etc., compared to gratitude and compassion). In addition, US participants tended to show more variation than Japanese participants.

In Study 2, we examined whether the beliefs found in Study 1 parallels actual ease of experience through an emotion induction task (recall) in a US sample. We measured the success of experiencing positive emotion (intensity) and the overall improvement or benefit (general change in positivity/negativity). Unlike Study 1, there was much less differentiation in the intensity/success and ease of experience of positive emotion in negative contexts. The investigation revealed a gap between lay beliefs and actual experiences of ease, suggesting that people's theories may not guide them to the most suitable emotion regulatory goal in the given context, which has important implications on emotion goal setting. However, in both studies, we found consistency in the lay perception of the ease of experience for feeling moved especially in sad contexts.

Chapter 4: We focused solely on the emotion of feeling moved to investigate if the negative context influenced the experience of the emotion, and its function of feeling moved in 3 studies (N = 1030). We posit that threat, such as natural disasters, would enhance the experience of feeling moved, and feeling moved would lead individuals to perceive their personal problems as less difficult, enabling them to extend help to others. In Study 1, we first establish a connection between collective threat, feeling moved and negative attitudes, using experimental manipulation and an ongoing natural disaster as the collective threat contexts in parts A and B respectively. Studies 2 and 3 focused on examining the effect of different forms of collective threat on feeling moved and replicating the effect of feeling moved on negative attitudes towards personal problems. We additionally measured the perceived societal impact of collective threat in each condition as a gauge of the potential consequence of such threat on society. We manipulated the degree of collective threat via societal impact (Study 2), and examined it as an additional mediator between collective threat and feeling moved (Study 3). We also measured perceptions of personal problems, and other prosocial-related variables.

Overall, we found that threat influenced feeling moved when societal impact of the threat was higher, and feeling moved lowered perceptions of personal problems which increased the perceived capacity to help others. These effects did not apply to other emotions measured like happiness, awe and gratitude. Hence, through feeling moved, we demonstrated that certain emotions may be more functional and suited for specific contexts, and that further contextual-based studies of emotion experience would be critical.

Chapter 5 (General Discussion): Overall, we found that certain positive emotions are especially relevant to specific negative contexts and that emotion goal setting should take into account one's current experience of negative emotions. We discuss the applicability of this current dissertation in influencing individuals' evaluations of emotions, especially with regard to the utility of an emotion. Further considerations of instrumental emotion goal setting, such as cultural valuation, desired negative emotional goals, emotional awareness, beliefs about the malleability of emotion experiences were discussed in light of future research. The current dissertation presents a novel perspective in weighing positive emotional goals according to the negative context, in order to facilitate a more successful pursuit of positive emotion goals and their associated benefits.