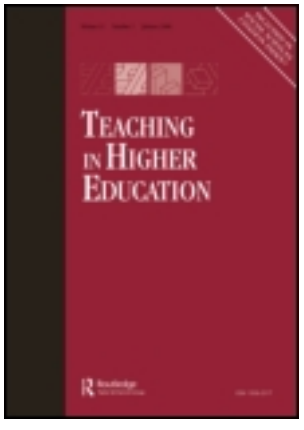

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Which self-presentation style is more effective? A comparison of instructors' self-enhancing and self-effacing styles across the culture

Eun Joo Kim[a], Charles Berger[b], Joohan Kim[a] & Min-Sun Kim[c]

[a] Graduate School of Education, Yonsei University, 50 Yonsei Ro, Seoul, Republic of Korea

[b] Department of Communication, University of California, 377 Kerr Hall, Davis, CA 95616, USA

[c] Department of Communicology, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI 96822, USA

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Which self-presentation style is more effective? A comparison of instructors' self-enhancing and self-effacing styles across the culture

Eun Joo Kim[a], Charles Berger[b], Joohan Kim[a] and Min-Sun Kim[c]*

[a]*Graduate School of Education, Yonsei University, 50 Yonsei Ro, Seoul, Republic of Korea;*
[b]*Department of Communication, University of California, 377 Kerr Hall, Davis, CA 95616, USA;*
[c]*Department of Communicology, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI 96822, USA*

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Many studies have investigated how people perceive others' self-presentation styles (such as enhancement and effacement) in forming first impressions and how culture influences the process. Most of those studies have, however, investigated self-presentation styles in the context of informal and intimate interpersonal relations. Few studies have examined the perceptions of self-presentation styles in formal communication contexts such as instruction in classrooms. This study examines how college students from different cultures perceive professors' self-presentation styles in terms of competence and likability with the samples from the Mainland USA, Hawaii, and South Korea. The results from the latent mean analyses showed that professors with self-enhancement were perceived as more competent but less favorable in the Mainland USA and Hawaii, but not in South Korea – self-promoter's paradox was not found, while trade-offs between competence perception and likability seemed to exist. Structural equation models showed that, in explaining the variances of self-presentation perceptions, self-construals were significant variables in the Mainland USA and Hawaii, but not in South Korea. Academic motivations, on the contrary, appeared as significant variables in South Korea only. The implications of the findings are discussed in terms of cultural differences through self-construals in perceiving others' self-presentation styles.

Keywords: instructional communication; self-construal; self-presentation; impression formation

Introduction

First impressions matter. At the beginning of a semester, professors make self-presentations to their classes, often expecting favorability and respect from their students. Researchers have found that students' first impressions have enduring effects on the evaluation of the instructors and class satisfaction throughout the whole semester (Babad, Bernieri, and Rosenthal 1991; Davis 1993; McKeachie 2011). Babad, Bernieri, and Rosenthal (1991), for example, reported that the first impressions of just 10-second observation were enough for students to judge whether they would like their teachers or not. Which presentation style, then, would be the most effective for instructors to look competent and likable to their students? Although there have been many studies on the perceptions of various self-presentation styles, the results of the studies seem to provide some confusion, much less helpful and practical answers.

*Corresponding author. Email: kmin@hawaii.edu

First of all, some studies reported that one should enhance oneself to look competent (Heine and Lehman 1997; Miller et al. 1992; Paulhus 1998), while others warned that self-enhancement might result in a backfire, producing less credibility and lowered competent perception – so-called self-promoter's paradox (Jones and Pittman 1982; Pfeffer et al. 2006).

Second, favorability may be garnered through self-effacement and competent perception through self-enhancement (Kim et al. 2003; Muramoto, Yamaguchi, and Kim 2009). In other words, there is a trade-off effect between competent perception and likability.

Third, the question involves the effects of culture. Many studies have reported that culture tend to strongly influence individuals' perceptions of others' self-presentation styles. The question is, however, whether culture would still have a significant impact on students in classrooms – the groups of people who are situated in a very similarly structured context of instructional settings. In other words, would it be possible for instructors to form better impressions for their students by employing different self-presentation strategies according to the culture – say, self-enhancement for students of Western culture and self-effacement for students of Asian culture? Or, would the instructors form a better impression by taking either of enhancement or effacement, regardless of their culture?

The purpose of this study is to test theories and findings of traditional self-presentation studies within a formal communication context – instructional situation. The basic assumption is that in an instructional situation, students' perceptions of professors' self-presentation styles will be influenced by academic motivation (the context-specific variable) as well as by cultural orientations, or self-construals.

More specifically, this study probes whether the self-promoter's paradox and the trade-off between competent perception and likability would exist in the instructional communication contexts as well. College students in the Mainland USA, Hawaii, and South Korea were asked to read four hypothetical speech texts (two self-enhancing and two self-effacing presentation styles) of professor's self-introduction at the first class of a semester. After reading each of the four presentations, the students were asked to judge the professors in terms of likability and perceived competence.

Self-presentation styles and perceptions: self-enhancement and self-effacement

Self-presentation is an attempt to control one's own images perceived by other people. People have a strong and pervasive desire to make a positive impression on others (Leary and Kowalski 1990; Schlenker 1980; Tice et al. 1995). People may employ various types of self-presentations to manage their impressions. Scholars have developed various typologies. While various typologies exit, self-enhancement and self-effacement are the most basic types of self-presentation (Hewitt et al. 2003; Jones and Pittman 1982; Schlenker and Leary 1982).

The basic motives of self-presentation are being liked and respected (Casciaro and Lobo 2005; Cuddy, Fiske, and Glick 2008; Godfrey, Jones, and Lord 1986; Leary 1996; Singh and Tor 2008). These studies have been conducted with the various conceptual frameworks such as warmth vs. competence (Fiske, Cuddy, and Glick 2007) and other-morality vs. competence (Wojciszke 2005). People want to be liked by others because it garners us diverse social rewards such as friendship, social support, companionship,

romance, and status. People want respect from others because it implies higher status, more influence on others, and better jobs (Leary 1996).

This study compares the effects of the two basic types – self-enhancing and self-effacing presentations – on the perception of likability (Which of the two types is liked more?) and competence (Which of the two types is perceived as more competent?). There is empirical evidence for our assumption. Ginzel (1994), for example, found that self-promoters were more readily perceived as competent to their peer students in public speaking situation. Baumeister, Tice, and Hutton (1989) also found that in the context of job interview, self-enhancing is more effective strategy. Thus, we propose that self-promoter's paradox would not exist in the instructional contexts. In a formal setting where performance itself is an issue, self-enhancement can be an effective strategy. And the effects of a formal setting would appear in all three cultures. Thus, we hypothesize that:

> Hypothesis 1: Professors' self-enhancement would achieve higher level of competence perception than self-effacement in all three groups.

Another issue with the competence perception is that even when competence is achieved, it is often obtained at the cost of likability. The rationale of such a trade-off is that when people emphasize their own strengths, they are likely to be seen as 'arrogant and conceited', which are unfavorable traits (Schlenker and Leary 1982; Godfrey, Jones, and Lord 1986). When people act modestly, they may get favorability (Kim et al. 2003; Miller et al. 1992), but may not be viewed as competent (Jones 1990). A host of prior studies demonstrated that North Americans have a pervasive tendency to enhance an overall evaluation of the self, whereas East Asian people were more likely to be modest because the social context is relatively conducive to self-effacement (Heine and Lehman 1997; Kitayama et al. 1997). Thus, we hypothesize that:

> Hypothesis 2-1: Professors' self-enhancement would achieve lower level of likability than self-effacement in all three groups.

> Hypothesis 2-2: Professors' self-enhancement would achieve lowest level of likability with the samples of South Korea, followed by those of Hawaii, and then by those of the Mainland USA.

Self-construals and self-presentation perceptions

The concept of self-construal was originally developed to explain cultural differences in behaviors and attitudes at individual levels (Chen et al. 2006; Kim et al. 1996, 2003; Heine and Lehman 1997; Kitayama et al. 1997). According to Markus and Kitayama (1991), the central difference between the two self-construals is the belief one maintains regarding how the self is related to others. Those of independent self see themselves as separate from others, whereas those of interdependent self see themselves as connected with others. The individual of independent construals strives to achieve uniqueness and self-actualization, and to express one's own unique strengths. The validity of self-construal scales, however, is still controversial (Gudykunst and Lee 2003; Levine et al. 2003). With regard to independent self-construal, most studies have shown that individuals from Western cultures tend to have higher level of independency and those from Asian cultures have higher level of interdependency (Gudykunst et al. 1996;

Singelis and Brown 1995). In terms of interdependent self-construal, some studies reported that East Asian people tended to show higher interdependent self-construal than Western people (Barnlund and Yoshioka 1990; Cross, Bacon, and Morris 2000; Markus and Kitayama 1991), while other studies reported no differences or even reversed results (Sato and Cameron 1999).

The main assumption of this paper is to test how students perceive the professors' self-presentation styles. The evaluation of others' self-presentation styles, whether self-enhancing or self-effacing, would be influenced by how one conceives one's relationships with others. Intercultural studies have demonstrated that people tend to have different levels of self-connectedness with others. We, thus, hypothesized that people of Western cultures tend to have more independent self-construals, which allow higher level of tolerance toward self-enhancing, while people of Eastern cultures tend to have more interdependent self-construals, which more highly evaluate self-effacement. The authors of the study selected the samples from the three areas, which represent Western (Mainland USA), Eastern (South Korea), and a mixed (Hawaii) cultures.

Hypothesis 3-1: Independent self-construal would be highest with the students in the Mainland USA, followed by those in Hawaii, and then those in South Korea.

Hypothesis 3-2: Interdependence self-construal would be highest with the students in South Korea, followed by those in Hawaii, and then those in the Mainland USA.

Instructional context and academic motivation

As previous studies have shown that the effects of self-presentation styles are strongly influenced by the contexts in which they are implemented (Hewitt et al. 2003; Tice et al. 1995). In the current study, we examined the students' reactions to the self-enhancing and the self-effacing presentations in instructional contexts, assuming that instructor–student relationships would have their own unique characteristics. First of all, instructors and students communicate for the specific purposes of teaching and learning. As such, instructors' competence is a critical factor and the relationship is primarily formal and task-oriented.

Scholars of motivation have developed the concepts of intrinsic motivation, which is related to interests in the task itself, doing the task itself is the innate reward (Ryan and Deci 2000). In this study, we consider particularly intrinsic motivation as the context-specific variable because intrinsic motivation is known closely related to one's self view, and as such, it would influence the perceptions of the instructor's self-presentation styles. One of the recent studies of educational psychology reported that teachers' teaching style and students' motivation had dynamic interactions: autonomy supportive teaching style, which was more closely related to self-enhancing presentations of instructors, increased students' engagement and intrinsic motivation, and in turn, students with higher level of intrinsic motivation perceived teacher's autonomy teaching styles more positively. The results strongly suggest that highly motivated students would perceive self-enhancing instructors more positively (Jang, Kim, and Reeve 2012).

Our assumption is that intrinsic motivation would positively influence evaluations toward self-enhancing presentations, which emphasize instructors' competence, track record, and enthusiasm. We also hypothesized that the degree to which intrinsic academic

motivation affects the perception of self-presentations would not significantly differ across the culture.

Method

Participants

A total of 773 college students in the Mainland USA (at the University of California at Davis, 98 females and 61 males, age ranged from 19 to 37 with a mean of 22.27), Hawaii (at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, 110 females and 114 males, the gender of three unknown, age ranged from 17 to 37 with a mean of 20.67), and South Korea (at Yonsei University, 188 females and 199 males, age ranged from 19 to 30 with a mean of 21.08) comprised the sample for this study.

Procedure

Participants were asked to read four hypothetical speech texts (two self-enhancing and two self-effacing presentation styles) of professor's self-introduction at the first class of a semester. After reading each of the four presentations, participants were asked to judge the professors in terms of likability and perceived competence. Each of the self-presentation styles was represented with two hypothetical scenarios: one centered on the professor's general accomplishments and expertise; the other on a book written by the professor. To rule out possible order effects, we made four versions of the questionnaire by rotating the order of the speech tests. The four versions of the questionnaire were randomly assigned to the participants. To ensure message consistency between the English and Korean texts, the presentation scripts were translated from English to Korean by one of the authors, with the items back-translated into English by a bilingual graduate student. Independent judges then considered the equivalence of the original and back-translated versions of the materials. After discussing any instance of nonequivalence, we did the final editing of the translated versions. The four hypothetical presentation texts are in the Appendix.

Manipulation check

To check whether the hypothetical presentation texts were actually interpreted as intended, an independent sample of college students (31 Korean and 24 American students residing at Yonsei University campus in Seoul) were asked to indicate the degrees of 'self-enhancement' and 'self-effacement' of the speech texts. Responses were measured on a seven-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). In terms of self-enhancement, the self-enhancing presentations were perceived as much more self-enhancing ($M = 5.44$, SD = 1.19) than the self-effacing ones ($M = 1.82$, SD = 0.92). And the self-effacing presentations were perceived as much more modesty ($M = 5.78$, SD = 0.93) than the self-enhancing ones ($M = 1.63$, SD = 0.99). The differences were all statistically significant ($p < 0.001$).

Measures

In this study, all responses were measured on a seven-point scale. For measures of self-construals, we selected 13 items (six independent and seven interdependent items) from the Kim et al.'s (2003) self-construal scales of 20 items. The independent self-construal scale included such items as 'I act as a unique person, separate from others'; and the interdependent scale included items like 'My relationships with those in my group are more important than my personal accomplishments'.

These 13 items were selected to secure the reliability of the scale across the three independent samples. The Cronbach's alphas and the means of the six independent items were: for Yonsei University ($\alpha = 0.77$, $M = 5.00$, SD = 0.94), for U of Hawaii ($\alpha = 0.83$, $M = 5.64$, SD = 0.92), and for UC Davis ($\alpha = 0.83$, $M = 5.58$, SD = 0.99). And those of the seven interdependent items were: for Yonsei University ($\alpha = 0.76$, $M = 4.80$, SD = 0.78), for U of Hawaii ($\alpha = 0.75$, $M = 4.87$, SD = 0.86), and for UC Davis ($\alpha = 0.75$, $M = 4.86$, SD = 0.84). In order to test the structural models, we randomly created three parcels: for the independent self-construal construct, two items for each of the three parcels; for the independent self-construal, two items for two parcels and three items for one parcel. We used the averages of those items in each parcel as indicators of the latent variable (Byrne, Shavelson, and Muthen 1989; Kishton and Widaman 1994).

Likability and perceived competence toward the four presentations were measured by the items proposed by Kim et al. (2004). Three items were used to measure likability, for example 'The professor is a likable person'. The items were provided immediately after each of the scenarios.

To measure students' academic motivation in instructional situations, we modified the Self-Regulation Questionnaire, originally developed by Ryan and Connell (1989) and the Academic Motivation Scale by Vallerand et al. (1992). Three items were used to measure motivation (e.g. 'I go to college because I experience pleasure and satisfaction while learning new things').

The Cronbach's alphas and the means of the three academic motivation items were: for Yonsei University ($\alpha = 0.70$, $M = 5.12$, SD = 0.42), for U of Hawaii ($\alpha = 0.79$, $M = 5.49$, SD = 0.02), and for UC Davis ($\alpha = 0.77$, $M = 5.68$, SD = 0.01).

Statistical analyses

The data analysis consisted of two parts: (a) the test of the equivalence of the measurement model across the three samples and examination of the latent mean differences and (b) the test of the equivalence of the structural model. This study employed full-information maximum-likelihood estimation with AMOS 5.0 (Arbuckle 2003), which has been found to be very efficient for incomplete data (Hong and Ho 2005).

Results

The normality of each variable was investigated in terms of its kurtosis and skewness because the maximum likelihood estimation procedures used in this study might produce distorted results when the normality assumption was severely violated (Curran, West and Finch 1996). According to the guidelines of severe non-normality (i.e. skewness$>$2; kurtosis$>$7), the normality assumption of all the variables was met. Descriptive statistics of the indicators are presented in Table 1.

Perceptions of the three presentation styles within each group

As expected, professors' self-enhancing presentation was perceived as more competent than self-effacing presentation in the Mainland USA (paired mean difference = 1.52, $t = 14.61$, $p < 0.001$), in Hawaii (paired mean difference = 1.56, $t = 14.57$, $p < 0.001$), and in Korea (paired mean difference = 1.58, $t = 25.22$, $p < 0.001$). In instructional contexts, in order to garner competence perception from students, professors should take self-enhancing presentation strategy. Professors need not concern the self-promoter's

Table 1. Common factor loadings for the three samples and overall descriptive statistics.

	Common factor loadings							Descriptive statistics			
	IND	INT	AM	LH	LF	CH	CF	Mean	SD	Skew	Kurtosis
IND1	0.84							5.25	1.22	−0.49	−0.46
IND2	0.78							5.36	1.16	−0.43	−0.52
IND3	0.59							5.30	1.13	−0.54	−0.20
INT1		0.80						4.95	1.09	−0.54	0.47
INT2		0.80						4.93	0.97	−0.50	0.56
INT3		0.51						4.62	1.06	−0.51	0.29
AM1			0.80					5.41	1.28	−1.03	1.21
AM2			0.52					4.98	1.48	−0.50	−0.33
AM3			0.72					5.69	1.24	−1.20	1.75
LH1				0.90				3.26	1.14	0.13	−0.05
LH2				0.85				3.17	1.19	0.26	−0.01
LH3				0.93				3.22	1.20	0.30	0.17
LF1					0.91			4.02	1.37	−0.01	−0.62
LF2					0.87			3.95	1.25	0.05	−0.17
LF3					0.89			3.36	1.20	0.31	0.00
CH1						0.91		5.08	1.15	−0.65	0.41
CH2						0.89		5.30	1.14	−0.69	0.44
CH3						0.77		4.86	1.26	−0.32	−0.48
CF1							0.90	3.58	1.13	0.05	−0.16
CF2							0.87	3.41	1.10	0.15	0.03
CF3							0.90	3.58	1.13	0.10	−0.11

Note: Common factor loadings are standardized coefficients with equivalence constraints across the three samples. The factor loading values are from the Korean sample which has the largest sample size. IND = independent self-construal; INT = interdependent self-construal; AM = academic motivation; LH = likeability of self-enhancing; LF = likeability of self-effacing; CH = perceived competence of self-enhancing; CF = perceived competence of self-effacing.

paradox, at least in classroom. The results are summarized in Figure 1, which shows trade-off effects across the culture.

A series of paired-sample *t*-tests showed that the differences in likability toward the two presentation styles were statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) for each of the three samples, except for the Korean sample: Hypothesis 1-1 was partially supported (for details, refer to the raw mean scores in Table 3).

In terms of perceived competence, we hypothesized that self-enhancing would be ranked highest. Yet in all three groups, self-enhancing presentation was perceived to be more competent than self-effacing presentations. A series of paired-sample *t*-tests revealed that the differences in perceived competence toward the two presentation styles were statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) for each of the three samples; thus, Hypothesis 1-2 was not supported. The results indicate that, unlike other general interpersonal communication contexts, self-enhancing presentation styles were liked and perceived as competent in instructional communication contexts.

Test of measurement invariance

In order to perform latent mean analysis, configural, metric, and scalar invariance of the measurement models across the samples must be confirmed (Hong, Malik, and Lee

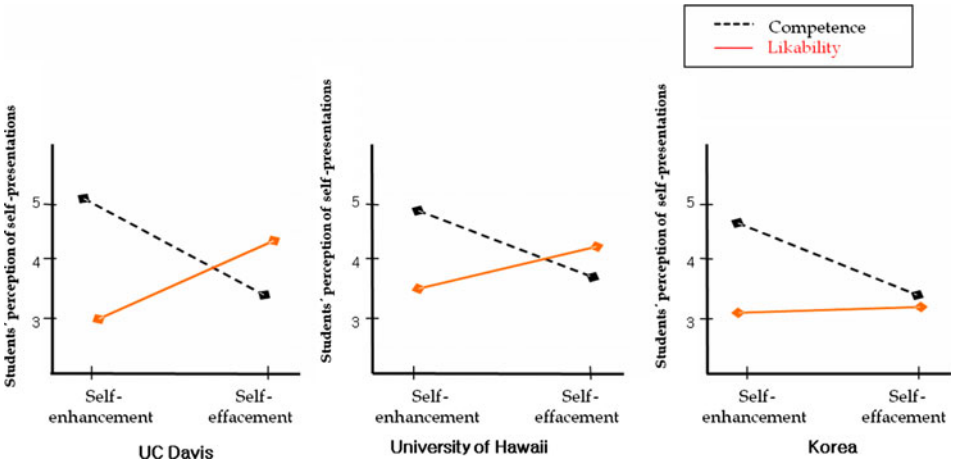

Figure 1. Competence and likability perception of self-enhancing and self-effacing presentations in the three samples.

2003). The fit of the base model was good, χ^2 (144, N = 773) = 316.53, $p < 0.001$, Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) = 0.91, Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = 0.94, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) = 0.04, suggesting that the measurement model adequately represented the data in all three groups – the configural invariance was confirmed.

In the second model, the fit of the metric invariance model (Model 2) was still good, the χ^2 difference was not statistically significant, and the differences in fit were minimal: $\Delta\chi^2$ (16, N = 773) = 22.55, p = 0.13, ΔTLI = 0.01, ΔRMSEA = 0.00. The common factor loading estimates across the samples are presented in Table 1.

In the third model, scalar invariance was tested by constraining the intercepts to be equal across the three groups. By constraining the intercepts, the fit of the model (Model 3) deteriorated: $\Delta\chi^2$ (24, N = 773) = 432.02, $p < 0.001$, ΔTLI = 0.16, ΔRMSEA = 0.02. The model comparisons revealed that the significant increase in chi-square results was mainly due to lack of scalar invariance of the five indicators. Fit indices for the

Table 2. Fit indices of the measurement models.

Models for self-construals and academic motivations	χ^2	*df*	TLI	RMSEA
Baseline model: Model 1	316.53	144	0.91	0.04
Full metric invariance: Model 2	339.08	160	0.92	0.04
Full metric and full scalar invariance: Model 3	771.10	184	0.76	0.06
Full metric and partial scalar invariance: Model 4	427.74	174	0.89	0.04
Full metric, partial scalar, factor variance invariance: Model 5	438.97	182	0.89	0.04
Models for likeability and competence perception	χ^2	*df*	TLI	RMSEA
Baseline model: Model 6	817.19	360	0.95	0.04
Full metric invariance: Model 7	879.22	384	0.95	0.04
Full metric and full scalar invariance: Model 8	1556.54	420	0.89	0.06
Full metric and partial scalar invariance: Model 9	1169.36	414	0.93	0.05
Full metric, partial scalar, factor variance invariance: Model 10	1244.23	426	0.92	0.05
Three covariance invariance: Model 11	864.39	366	0.94	0.04

Note: N = 773.

Table 3. Latent and raw means of the constructs.

Latent Construct		UC Davis (N = 159)		U of Hawaii (N = 227)		Yonsei U (N = 387)		Total raw means
		Latent	Raw	Latent	Raw	Latent	Raw	
Independence		0	5.57_{a}	0.02	5.64_{a}	−0.75***	5.00_{b}	5.30
Interdependence		0	4.86_{a}	0.02	4.87_{a}	−0.37***	4.80_{a}	4.83
Likeability	Self-enhancing	0	3.02_{a}	0.31**	3.34_{b}	0.20*	3.23_{ab}	3.22
	Self-effacing	0	4.39_{a}	−0.21	4.24_{a}	−0.59***	3.26_{b}	3.78
Competence Perception	Self-enhancing	0	5.32_{a}	−0.06	5.26_{a}	−0.37***	4.88_{b}	5.08
	Self-effacing	0	3.80_{a}	−0.12	3.72_{a}	−0.46***	3.29_{b}	3.52

Note: Latent means are relative to the University of California, Davis, which is set to zero. Raw means with different subscripts are significantly different from one another at $p < 0.05$ using Tukey t-test for post hoc comparisons.
*$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$.

models are presented in Table 2. As metric and scalar invariance were satisfied, the differences in latent means across the samples were tested (Table 3).

To convert the latent mean differences to a common and familiar metric, Cohen's d effect size index (Cohen 1988) was computed. The results show that, in terms of independent self-construal, the Korean students were substantially and statistically significantly lower than their counterparts in California and in Hawaii; but there was no significant difference between the Californian and the Hawaiian samples: Hypothesis 2-1 was partially supported. Regarding interdependent self-construal, the Korean students were also statistically significantly lower than their counterparts in California and in Hawaii: Hypothesis 2-2 was not supported. Furthermore, there were no statistically significant differences among the three samples in terms of academic motivations.

Test of the hypothesized model within each group

In the hypothesized model, the three independent variables (independent and interdependent self-construals and academic motivations) influence the four dependent variables (likability of self-enhancing and self-effacing presentations, and competence perception of self-enhancing and self-effacing presentations). The correlations between likeability and perceived competence for each of the presentation syles are presented in Table 4. In all, 12 paths were tested. The simultaneous test of the hypothesized model with the three samples, with factor loadings and structural links freely estimated, showed that the model fit was adequate. The standardized path coefficients of each model are presented in Table 5. The results indicate that the hypothesized model generally fit for all of the three samples.

With respect to the self-enhancing presentations, independent self-construal positively influenced likability only with the Korean sample; and independent self-construal positively influenced perceived competence only with the samples from California and Hawaii: Hypothesis 2-3 was only partially supported.

Table 4. Correlations coefficients between likeability and perceived competence for each of the presentation styles.

Parameters	UC Davis	Hawaii	Yonsei	$\Delta\chi^2(df = 2)$
LH ↔ LF	0.16	0.27***	0.49***	5.39
CH ↔ CF	0.65***	0.52***	0.72***	7.05*

Note: LH = likeability of self-enhancing; LF = likeability of self-effacing; CH = perceived competence of self-enhancing; CF = perceived competence of self-effacing.
*$<p < 0.05$; ***$p < 0.001$.

Table 5. Standardized path coefficients and chi-square value differences with invariance constraints.

	Parameters	UC Davis	Hawaii	Yonsei	$\Delta\chi^2$ ($df = 2$)
Paths	IND → LH	−0.16	−0.07	0.12*	4.14
	IND → LF	0.06	0.06	0.01	0.38
	IND → CH	0.17*	0.16*	0.07	3.30
	IND → CF	0.13	−0.11	−0.08	3.98
	INT → LH	−0.06	−0.04	−0.07	0.02
	INT → LF	0.07	0.24**	−0.03	2.15
	INT → CH	0.25*	0.33***	0.07	7.85*
	INT → CF	0.04	0.05	0.00	1.60
	AM → LH	−0.09	0.16*	0.13*	3.71
	AM → LF	−0.04	0.06	−0.21**	6.77*
	AM → CH	−0.13	−0.03	0.11	3.75
	AM → CF	−0.20*	0.10	−0.09	5.01

Note: Numbers in the first three columns are regression coefficients in the baseline model. Numbers in the last column, $\Delta\chi^2$, indicate the increased chi-square values when each of the paths was constrained to be equal across the samples. The changes of model fit between the baseline model and each of the constrained models were all minimal: ΔTLI = 0.00, ΔRMSEA = 0.00. $N = 773$.
IND = independent self-construal; INT = interdependent self-construal; AM = academic motivation; LH = likeability of self-enhancing; LF = likeability of self-effacing; CH = perceived competence of self-enhancing; CF = perceived competence of self-effacing.
*$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$.

Regarding the self-effacing presentations, interdependent self-construal did not increase likability or perceived competence in any of the three groups, except likability with the Hawaiian sample: Hypothesis 2-4 was not supported. It is notable that the self-construals generally had stronger impacts on perceived competence than on likability.

With regard to self-enhancing presentations, academic motivation increased likability with the Hawaiian and the Korean samples, but did not enhance perceived competence in any of the three groups: Hypothesis 3-1 was partially supported only for likability. In response to self-enhancing presentations, academic motivation did not increase perceived competence with any of the three samples. Thus, Hypothesis 3-2 was not supported. The results indicate that, generally, students with higher academic motivations like self-enhancing presentation styles more than less motivated students.

Test of the structural model invariance across the groups

To see whether the structural relationships among the independent and the dependent variables were also invariant across the samples, we tested the equivalence of the

structural paths among the latent constructs. When all 12 paths were constrained to be equal across the samples, the chi-square values increased at a statistically significant level. The results are presented in Table 5.

For the effects of interdependent self-construal, the path to perceived competence of self-enhancing was significant with the samples from U.C. Davis and Hawaii, but not with the Korean sample – and the difference was statistically significant. Hypothesis 2–5 was supported.

As for academic motivation, the path to likability of self-effacing presentation appeared negative and significant only with the Korean sample, but not with the other two groups. As hypothesized, degrees to which academic motivation affects the perceptions of presentation styles were different across the samples, but only with likability perception of the self-effacing presentation style: Hypothesis 3-3 was only partially supported.

Discussion

Which of the two self-presentation styles do students like more in instructional contexts? The answer is self-enhancing presentation, according to our results. Moreover, whether from California, Hawaii, or Korea, the students perceived self-enhancing presentation style as more likable and competent. The results suggest that professors should not downplay themselves, if they want to look competent as well as likable. This study found that likability is strongly and positively associated with perceived competence, regardless of culture. The results suggest that instructors should employ self-enhancing presentation styles in class, and they will have a higher chance to garner love and respect from their students, whether they teach in the Mainland USA, in Hawaii, or in Korea. The effects of self-enhancing presentation style will be even higher if their students have higher levels of academic motivations.

This study predicted that self-construals would affect perceptions of self-presentation styles. As we hypothesize, the level of independent self-construal is higher in the Mainland USA than in Korea. This result is consistent with many previous studies: The independent self is more dominant among individualistic societies such as the USA and Western Europe than in East Asian societies. Independent self-construal, defined by a view of the self as separated from others, is rather stable across cultures. A series of structural equation models within and across the samples reveal that students with higher level of independent self-construal tend to perceive self-enhancing presentation to be competent (in Mainland USA and in Hawaii) and likable (in Korea). The results suggest that professors with self-enhancing presentation style may look competent to students with higher levels of independent self-construal in the Mainland USA and Hawaii, and may be well liked in Korea.

In a nutshell, the theoretical significance of this study is that (a) effects of self-presentation styles in formal contexts might quite different from those in informal contexts; (b) self-presentation studies should consider context-specific variables as well as cultural variables; and (c) besides self-presentation studies, cross-cultural studies in general should pay a closer attention to possible effects of context-specific variables in considering cultural effects.

Limitations and suggestions for further studies are as follows: This study recruited participants from one university from each of the three areas: The Mainland USA, Hawaii, and Korea. As such, we should be careful in interpreting the results whether they

are characteristics of the cultures from which the samples originated or those of the city or school's subcultures or organizational cultures.

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Appendix A

Bragging presentation 1: on self

'Hello, everyone. I am very glad to meet you all today. First, I would like to introduce myself. I am proud to announce that I have been recognized as one of the most prolific scholars in the field. I am also quite confident, given my extensive experience, about the quality of my teaching methods and materials. There may be other classes like this one taught by other professors, but consider yourself lucky to be sitting here in *my* class. I hope you will show me your best efforts throughout the semester'.

Bragging presentation 2: on book

'Hello, everyone. This course will use one of my books as a required textbook. This book is a bestseller in the field and received the "Distinguished Book of the Year" award last year. Since I have been recognized as one of the most prolific scholars in the field, it is not a surprise. It took only about a month for me to write the book. Since the book has been out, I have received many requests to be a guest lecturer, with the highest level of honorarium. I hope you will enjoy this course'.

Positive self-presentation 1: on self

'Hello everyone. I am very glad to meet you all today. First, I would like to introduce myself. I have taught this course for more than ten years, so I have come to know what materials you would most likely enjoy and what parts you might have difficulties with. I will do my best to teach you everything you want to get out of my class, and I will try to constantly update my lecture notes with new materials. I hope you will show me your best efforts throughout the semester'.

Positive self-presentation 2: on book

'Hello, everyone. This course will use one of my books as a required textbook. I am happy to say that this book received the "Distinguished Book of the Year" award last year. I have invested a great amount of time and effort to write this book and really appreciate this prize. I really enjoy teaching this course and always put a great deal of effort into it. I hope you will enjoy this course as much as I do'.

Negative self-presentation 1: on self

'Hello everyone. I am very glad to meet you all today. First, I would like to introduce myself. Yes, I am your professor, but to be honest, I am only where I am in life because I started school just a few years ahead of you guys. I'm so shocked that they asked me to teach this class. I mean, anyone can teach it as long as you go to grad school and finish all the course work. So, I really hope that you will be able to learn at least something useful from me. I hope you will show me your best efforts throughout the semester'.

Negative self-presentation 2: on book

'Hello, everyone. This course will use one of my books as a required textbook. To my surprise, this book received the "Distinguished Book of the Year" award last year. What a shock. When I heard the news, I thought to myself, "something must have gone wrong in the judging process" since I put it together in such a hurry. Still today, I often wonder if the award committee really did make a mistake. But in any case, I hope you will enjoy this course'.