The Effects of Cultural Differences on Constructive Capitalization Responses on Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Outcome Variables

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Abstract
The current paper examines cultural differences in capitalization responses based on independent and interdependent self-schemas, capitalization, and social support. Previous research has closely reviewed how the process of seeking social support, the effectiveness of social support and responses to social support can differ based on cultural group. The proposed study aims to address the same fields within the concept of capitalization, which is the sharing of good news with others. We examine the effects of different constructive capitalization responses on self-reported happiness, self-esteem, relationship closeness and relationship satisfaction between Asian Americans and European American groups. We aim to see whether any such differences are mediated or explained by cultural orientation (independence, interdependence) and other culture-related values (emotion expressivity, harmony values, modesty bias). We hypothesized that Asian Americans will experience greater benefit from passive-constructive capitalization responses than European Americans. Furthermore, Asian Americans will find a collectivistic-oriented active constructive capitalization response more beneficial while European Americans will consider an individually-oriented active constructive response more beneficial. Statistical analyses revealed an interaction effect of race and condition on relationship satisfaction such that EAs in the AC-I group rated relationship satisfaction higher than EAs in the PC group. There was also a significant main effect of condition on relationship satisfaction, a marginal main effect of condition on self-esteem and a marginal main effect of race on relationship closeness. The study was the first to cross-culturally examine the various effects of constructive capitalization responses.

KEYWORDS: capitalization, culture, perceived response, Individualistic, Collectivistic, Asian American, European American
Examining the Implications of Cultural Differences on Constructive Capitalization Responses

A wide body of literature examines how people maintain their well being in the face of negative events, often finding that people turn to others for support with stressors that run the gamut from everyday to major. Findings have called to question how much social support is beneficial for the help-seeker’s health and well being and have defined it as a major benefit of close relationships (Sarason, Sarason, and Gurung, 1997; Cunningham and Barbee, 2000). Many western cultures employ a variety of idioms that encourage individuals to be vocal about their problems (“Don’t bottle up those feelings. Spit it out!”), and individuals in such cultures are often encouraged to actively seek support in the face of these problems. Nevertheless, responses to the sharing of positive events have received little attention, possibly due to the fact that responses to negative events can be more directly associated with health and well-being (Taylor, 1991).

What about when things go right? Capitalization is the process of informing another person about a positive personal experience and thereby obtaining added benefit from it (Langston, 1994). For example, if Dale learns that he has been awarded a promotion at work, he may share the good news with his buddy, Brennan, enhancing his feelings of excitement and delight. Dale would be capitalizing on his good news by celebrating and sharing it with Brennan. Gable, Reis, Impett, and Asher (2004) performed an experiment that was one of the first to closely study capitalization and categorize the different types of capitalization responses. Three parts comprised the study. Study 1 was a daily diary study to demonstrate the association between capitalization and increased positive affect. Studies 2 and 3 looked at interpersonal consequences of capitalization with romantic couples observed in a lab. Gable et al. (2004) hypothesized that the response to a capitalization attempt would be a key determinant in deciding whether or not
the attempt was effective because the benefits of capitalization are believed to come from the building of social resources. In stressful situations, people will respond differently to social support; similarly, people will respond differently in a situation where good news is shared rather than negative news. While Gable et al. (2004) was significant in examining differences in the capitalization experience, it brings up an issue seen in several other studies due to its sample population, which was primarily European American undergraduate students. The concepts in capitalization studies may or may not be culturally biased and, given the increasingly diversifying population, may or may not apply for different groups. We were interested to see how the kind of response to a capitalization attempt is shaped by culture. As the current study addressed cultural differences in capitalization responses, it is necessary to examine the magnitude to which an individual’s culture plays a role in their psychological functioning.

Culture and Selves

Within the field of psychology, researchers have examined the individual as a product of culture to explain variety across societies. The self develops within and reacts to different situations to answer the universal questions of “Who or what am I?” and “How do I relate to others?” (Markus & Kitayama, 2010). Culture can determine such situations of self-development. For example, Iyengar and Lepper (1999) found that parental expectations can have conflicting motivational effects in Asian American versus European American families. While helping others can be seen as a moral obligation that dictates whether or not one likes the person in Indian cultures, the same is not seen in American contexts (Miller & Bersoff, 1998). The same actions can have opposite effects in different cultures based on what is accepted or expected due to cultural standards.
Such differences in relational dynamics and personal preferences can be and often are dictated by culture differences (Markus & Kitayama, 2010, Kitayama & Karasawa, 1995). Essentially, as it pertains to individual development, culture is an expansive set of concepts that gives form to personal behavior. The two basic modes of being, or how we distinguish relations between the self and others, can be separated into independence and interdependence. An independent self-schema is generally seen in cultures defined as individualistic societies such as the U.S. and countries in Australia, Canada, and Western Europe. People in these societies are motivated by the overarching goal to assert themselves and influence others within society. The importance of becoming a unique and distinct individual within the culture encourages the formation of this self-construal (Matsumoto, 1999). Also known as egocentric, autonomous, or idiocentric, this schema produces a sense of self as separate from others and supports personal achievement. Alternatively, interdependence causes one to view the identity as largely relational; an interdependent self-schema is seen primarily in collectivistic cultures in East Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Mexico. In these cultures, the self is defined through one’s relationships with others. Also referred to as allocentric or communal, individuals in a collectivistic society and operating with an interdependent self-schema prioritize the interests of the group before that of the self because of the chief idea that the self includes others within a community (Markus & Kitayama, 2010, Matsumoto, Kasri, & Koken, 1999, Matsumoto & Kupperbusch 2001). It is important to note that neither of these schemas is necessarily mutually exclusive; any individual or society or relationship can have aspects of both independence and interdependence (Greenfield, 2010).

The distinction between independence and interdependence has explained important consequences for socialization, health, and motivation among various aspects of psychological
functioning. If the schema for the self is independently focused, people will view themselves as stable and a free entity, focusing on individual thoughts, feelings and goals. According to Kohlberg’s (1969) Theory of Moral Development, the American ideology of child training emphasizes individualism and autonomy where the highest level of development is total control over moral decisions. Within an individualistic culture, the primary goal for the independent person is to impact and influence others with behaviors of self-assertion and expression (Harb & Smith, 2008). Children are encouraged to speak up and emote meaningfully in order to convey signs of competence and likeability (Butler, Lee, & Gross 2009). On the other hand, an interdependent self is viewed as connected, flexible and committed to others (Harb & Smith, 2008). Social interaction studies have found that children in Japanese culture are taught to value close alignment with family members and to identify with the group so that one’s individuality is not noticed (Weisz, Rothbaum, & Blackburn, 1984; Barnlund, 1975). Japanese children are disciplined using an empathy-oriented approach where the mother explains to the child how their misbehavior would hurt others’ feelings (Conroy, Hess, Azuma, & Kashiwagi, 1980). People who live by this schema focus on adjustment and accommodation in order to maintain a degree of group harmony or “goodness of fit” with others within society (Hsu, 1975). Group harmony is a primarily collectivistic value that influences emotion and behavior in order to develop non-confrontational and conflict-free relationships, and will be addressed later (Chen & Chung, 1994).

Culture and Social Support

Social support is a universal and effective means by which people cope with stressful or trying events; it allows people to adjust to difficult events and thus prevent the detrimental mental and physical effects of stress (Cohen & Willis, 1985). While the majority of research on
social support has established its effectiveness, most studies have adopted a Western perspective lacking a cross-cultural analysis. Recent work has attempted to increase an understanding of how social support functions differently among different cultures (Kim, Sherman and Taylor 2008; Wang, Shih, Hu, Louie and Lau 2010). Because social support involves relationships between the self and the other, we can assume that the process will differ between individualistic and collectivistic cultures due to their differing views on self-other relations. Interdependent and independent views of the self might reflect differences in the expectations of support from others because the decision to seek social support depends largely on how the person expects others to react (Kim, Sherman, Ko, & Taylor, 2006). Further, culture impacts whether or not social support actually occurs, the mode of support people use, and how effective social support seeking is expected to be.

In a three-part study, Koreans (Study 1), Asians, and Asian Americans (Study 2) in the U.S. were found to significantly be less likely to seek social support in the face of negative events than European Americans (Taylor, Sherman, Kim, Jarcho, Takagi and Dunagan, 2004). The third part of the study examined potential reasons for these effects. In a collectivistic culture, people may be generally more cautious about discussing their personal problems with others for the sake of enlisting their help because of the unwillingness to disrupt group harmony and burden social networks (Kim et al., 2008; Kim et al., 2006). Asians and Asian Americans generally have more unsolicited social support available to them than European Americans do because of the belief that people within a social network should be able to detect when an individual needs support before it is explicitly requested. In addition, Asians and Asian Americans are generally more wary of negative relational consequences that may arise from burdening their social network with the obligation of providing social support; support seeking
may threaten harmony or could be a relational risk because it puts pressure on the relationship between the support seeker and the receiver (Kim et al. 2008; Matsumoto & Kupperbusch, 2001).

It is important to note that it is not that collectivistic social networks are less supportive or that people in these cultures do not benefit from any kind of social support, but rather that there may be significant differences in the way people seek and receive social support from their social networks. Taylor et al. (2007) introduce two types of social support: implicit and explicit. Explicit support refers to the conventional Western process of seeking social support in response to stressful situations where a person might go to another for advice or emotional comfort. The less familiar type of support, implicit support, occurs when a person is in the company of others and can feel the emotional comfort without having to speak openly of their stressful situation. It implies that one may obtain aid or solace from others, if needed. Implicit social support can allow the recipient of social support to experience the comfort of their relationships without the concern of having to speak outwardly about the stressor and potentially cause more discomfort or awkwardness in the reiterating of events. While European Americans are more likely to utilize explicit social support because of the notion that one should reach out for help when they need it, Asians and Asian Americans are more likely to turn to implicit social support because it aligns with the cultural values of accommodating and adjusting, two distinctively interdependent features. The cultural priority of maintaining group harmony may reduce any explicit social support seeking (Kim et al., 2006).

Just like cultural values of harmony maintenance can affect the probability of sharing negative events, the same can occur with positive events. In a major paper by Wang et al. (2010) daily support experiences, both negative and positive, were examined in Asian American and
European American college students using a daily diary design. It was found that Asian Americans were less likely to utilize support in the face of both negative and positive events than their European American counterparts. Results were explained primarily by the values of group harmony and maintaining emotional expression control (Wang et al., 2010). This finding was consistent with prior work (Butler et al., 2009; Kim et al., 2010). Not only did the Asian American subjects utilize social support less frequently than European American subjects, they also perceived support as less helpful (Wang et al., 2010).

Capitalization

In a three-part study using undergraduate students, romantically associated couples, and married couples, researchers examined the intrapersonal and interpersonal outcomes relating to capitalization, or the sharing of good news (Gable et al., 2004). Gable et al. (2004) established a system of classifying capitalization responses adapted from Rusbult’s model based on responses to negative behavior (Rusbult, Zembrod, & Gunn, 1982) Responses are categorized into intersections of two different dimensions, constructive-destructive and active-passive, resulting in four kinds of responses: active-constructive responses (e.g., enthusiastic support), passive-constructive responses (e.g., quiet, understated support), active-destructive responses (e.g., quashing the event), and passive-destructive responses (e.g., ignoring the event). In study 1, daily diaries were used to show that an increase of positive affect was associated with capitalization, beyond happiness associated with the positive event itself. Studies 2 and 3 utilized dating and married couples respectively to focus on perceptions of a close partner’s response to one’s capitalization attempts. Results from the study supported the hypothesis that active-constructive responses to capitalization are positively correlated with relationship quality.
There are several different reasons why capitalization is likely to lead to an increase in positive affect beyond the positive affect caused by the event itself. First, sharing a positive event with another person allows the individual to retell the event, creating an opportunity to re-experience the positive feelings associated with the event. Retelling may increase the likelihood for the experience to stay in the memory because of repeated retrieval; for this reason positive events that are capitalized on should be more memorable than positive events that are not capitalized on (Logan & Cobb, 2012).

Capitalization can also be beneficial for more interpersonal reasons. In a cross-cultural study using U.S. and Turkish college students, it was found that friendship quality mediates the relationship between capitalization and happiness (Demir, Doğan, and Proscal, 2013). Not only did American students report sharing good news more than Turkish students, capitalization was also positively associated with happiness and friendship quality in both U.S. and Turkish samples (Demir et al., 2013). Sharing positive events with others promotes social interactions and strengthens relationships. In addition, it can allow individuals to perceive that others are pleased for their success and good fortune, and boost the self-esteem of the capitalizer and further positive reflected appraisals (Gable et al., 2004). Such perceptions of oneself, however, are dependent on how the listener’s response is interpreted. A destructive response might stifle or reverse the positive effect generated by good news.

Based on findings from the Gable et al. (2004) study, the current study does not address destructive responses because none of these responses would be found beneficial—regardless of culture. The authors suggest that capitalization may have multiple mediating mechanisms such as making a good impression, establishing credibility, or eliciting validation. All of these mediating variables reflect a cultural priority on influencing and promoting the self among others and are
thus, highly individualistically oriented. In general, the paper has a highly individualistic approach to discussing the “most beneficial” type of capitalization. People with high emotion expression from Western cultures will evidently construe the active-constructive response as most beneficial because the high-excitement response is in line with the individualistic ideals of active emotion expression, which will be further discussed later. Those with low emotion expression who are especially conscious of group harmony may be more comfortable with a calmer, understated capitalization response. A passive-constructive response may allow the person capitalizing to experience sufficient emotional support without the over-enthusiasm separating them from the collective and thus, might make them uncomfortable (Taylor et al., 2007). Through our research we aim to address whether the “most beneficial” capitalization response can differ for individuals from different cultures as explained by various mediating variables.

Emotion Expression

In a study using Asian American and European American women, Butler et al. (2009) tested the hypothesis that cultural context moderates the relationship between expressivity and physiological response (blood pressure). By having Asian American and European American female dyads engaged in an interaction about a distressing film, it was found that emotion-expressive behavior was inversely related to blood pressure in European American pairs, but that the reverse occurred in Asian American pairs. Blood pressure was measured because of its sensitivity to contextual social factors. Findings supported the notion that emotional expression is approved in European American cultures but is less accepted for Asian Americans (Butler et al. 2009). Additionally, Ekman, Friesen and Ellsworth (1972) had an early and prominent cross-cultural study using American and Japanese male university students where participants viewed a
stressful film first alone, and then in the presence of an experimenter. While American students maintained negative expressions in both viewings of the film, with and without the experimenter, many Japanese students masked their feelings by smiling in the second viewing rather than show their negative feelings in the presence of the experimenter. This suggested that people in Japan are taught to avoid expressing negative feelings in front of others, while the tendency is less so in the U.S. Further, Friesen et al. (1972) went on to use the concept of individualism vs. collectivism to explain their results, saying that due to the Japanese collectivistic values of conformity and harmony maintenance, the Japanese subjects hid negative emotions so as to avoid offending the experimenter (Friesen et al., 1972).

Findings from Friesen et al. (1972) and Matsumoto & Kupperbusch (2001) suggest that people in collectivistic cultures may learn to dissociate their expressions from their actual feelings in social situations, whereas this may be less true for people in individualistic cultures who are socialized to express and assert the self. Suppressing emotions may be better for people in collectivistic societies because there is a lower risk of disturbing or suggesting disturbances in relationships and general group harmony.

Cultural differences in emotion expression are measured and explained through a concept called Affect Valuation Theory (AVT). Developed in 2007 by Jeanne Tsai, the AVT posits that cultural factors shape ideal affect, or how people want to feel. The ideal type of positive affect or “good feelings” may differ by culture because culture dictates what affective states individuals value or prefer. Tsai’s research in this area has shown that positive affect states can be classified as either high-arousal positive (HAP, e.g., excitement, enthusiasm) or low-arousal positive (LAP, e.g., calm, peacefulness) and that European Americans reported valuing HAP states significantly
more and LAP states significantly less than their Chinese counterparts (Tsai, Knutson, and Fung, 2006).

Capitalization responses that are perceived as the most beneficial to an individual may be influenced by the emotion expressed by the person who responds to the capitalization attempt. The culture a person associates him or herself may shape they way they tend to share positive events. Variation of emotion expression can affect how a person perceives responses to capitalization; while European Americans might view an enthusiastic, cheerful response as the most beneficial, Asian Americans might perceive joyful but calm responses as the most ideal, as proposed by the AVT.

An enthusiastic capitalization response might not be ideal for someone in an East Asian context because they may be overwhelmed or uncomfortable with the outwardly enthusiastic and highly expressive praise. These reactions may be due to the fact that people in a collectivistic culture have characteristically low levels of self-enhancement, or the desire to maintain and cultivate positive feelings of the self (Kurman 2003). Acting modest in speech and behavior is a key component of maintaining group harmony; not only does it avoid placing attention on one individual, making that person uncomfortable, but it also avoids making the rest of the group feel as though they are forced to join in on the praise or also capitalize on an event of their own (Flowerdew, 1998). An understated, yet earnest capitalization response may be more appropriate for individuals with high modesty and low emotion expression in collectivistic cultures.

While an enthusiastic capitalization response may be detrimental to a person in an East Asian context, it is likely to be beneficial to someone in an American context. As mentioned earlier, individualistic cultures value emotion expression and self-enhancement, so a perceived active-constructive capitalization response addresses and praises the attributes of an individual.
In addition, enthusiastic capitalization responses align with the HAP ideal affect that is characteristic of individualistic cultures (Tsai, 2007). An active constructive response is a state of HAP ideal affect because of its earnest, excited nature. A perceived capitalization response that is enthusiastic can invoke feelings of pride for both the person capitalizing and the person receiving the attempt (Gable et al., 2004).

**Happiness, Self-Esteem, Relationship Closeness, and Relationship Satisfaction**

While Wang et al. addresses various inter- and intrapersonal changes as a result of varying capitalization responses, other literature elaborates on the effects of capitalization on variables such as happiness, self-esteem, relationship closeness, and relationship satisfaction (Demir, Dogan, and Proscal, 2013; Smith & Reis, 2011; Logan & Cobb, 2012). In the previously mentioned Demir et al. (2013) study employing U.S. (i.e., Individualistic) and Turkish (i.e., Collectivistic) college students, self-reported friendship quality was found to mediate the relationship between capitalization and happiness. In addition, it was found that U.S. participants reported higher levels of capitalization than their Turkish peers. When individuals perceive that friends genuinely support their positive experiences, they will experience better friendships, which may in turn contribute to happiness.

In addition to happiness, self-esteem was found to moderate responses to capitalization (Smith & Reis, 2011). In an experiment and a daily diary study, Smith & Reis (2011) had romantic partners and same-sex close friends imagine betrayal or a disagreement to create relationship conflict. For both types of dyads, it was found that following relationship conflict, people with high self-esteem perceived higher enthusiasm after a capitalization attempt. These results suggest that capitalization may be a rewarding strategy for repairing a relationship for individuals with higher self-esteem.
While capitalization has been shown to directly affect intrapersonal effects of happiness and self-esteem, interpersonal factors of relationship quality have also been affected (Gable et al., 2004; Logan & Cobb, 2012). Capitalization attempts can have implications on relationship quality, but also from the way individuals perceive their partner’s response to these attempts. In a year-long longitudinal study looking at romantic relationships, researchers found that capitalization and social support were uniquely associated with relationship satisfaction; individuals who create a foundation of trust and mutual intimacy from consistent capitalization and social support attempts will be more willing to seek support when difficulties arise and be enthusiastic when good news is shared. If an individual is under the impression that their listener is attentive and responsive to information about their successful or negative events, this may cause the individual to perceive greater relationship satisfaction. This perception of genuine interest may indicate that the partner is committed to the relationship and is accessible in both good times and bad (Logan & Cobb, 2012). This responsiveness can also be a sign of greater investment in each other and in the relationship because good news becomes an obvious source of excitement for both parties involved.

The Current Study

The aim of the current study was to evaluate the research question addressing whether there were cultural group differences on the effects of different constructive capitalization responses. The effectiveness of capitalization responses was measured by self-reported Happiness, Self-esteem, Relationship Closeness and Relationship Satisfaction. Cultural values of harmony values, emotional expressiveness, independence, interdependence and modesty were expected to mediate the purported cultural differences. We expected to observe a main effect of cultural group (Asian American, European American) as well as a main effect of experimental
condition (Passive Constructive, Active Constructive-Individualistic, Active Constructive-Collectivistic) on the four dependent variables.

We predicted that EAs would be higher than AAs on Happiness and Self-esteem as explained by modesty biases and the restrained emotion expression behavior seen in East Asian cultures, respectively. We also predicted that EAs would have higher ratings of Relationship Closeness and Relationship Satisfaction because they are not as familiar with group harmony values. We believed that they would not necessarily expect an enthusiastic capitalization response and would be pleasantly surprised if they were to receive one. Contrarily, AAs would be more expectant of the positive response due to the obligatory nature of their relationships. Based on findings from Gable et al. (2004), we expected to see different effects of the Active Constructive conditions compared to the Passive Constructive condition on the dependent variables. After creating the distinction between AC-I and AC-C responses, we were interested in how the differences in response style would affect our dependent variables. An interaction effect was expected between cultural group and condition on all the dependent variables.

We hypothesized that Asian Americans would experience greater benefit from passive-constructive capitalization responses than European Americans. We expected Asian Americans to prefer an active-constructive capitalization response that was specifically collectivistic, and European Americans to prefer active constructive capitalization responses that were individually oriented more beneficial. We predicted these differences to be explained by cultural orientation and other culture related values such as emotion expression, modesty bias, and harmony values.
Methods

Participants

The current study recruited a total of 79 undergraduate male ($N = 17$) and female ($N = 62$) participants from the Bi-College consortium (Haverford and Bryn Mawr Colleges) with a mean age of 19.4 years ($SD = 1.49$). While approximately 51% of the participants were freshman ($N = 40$), all grades were represented in the sample. European Americans made up 59.5% of the participants ($N = 47$), and Asian Americans made up the remaining 40.5% ($N = 32$). The study utilized Asian American subjects with some exposure to traditional Asian values encompassing Confucian principles (such as respect for elders and an emphasis on the family). Participants in this group were defined as first and second-generation students with ethnic backgrounds of Korean ($N = 5$), Chinese ($N = 18$), Japanese ($N = 4$), Taiwanese ($N = 2$), Vietnamese ($N = 2$), and Filipino ($N = 1$). First generation Asians refer to people who were born in an Asian country while second generation Asians are the offspring of first-generation immigrants. The European American group was defined as individuals who identify as non-immigrant, or third generation (U.S. born) and beyond.

Asian affinity groups (Korean Student Association, East Asian Student Association, Asian Student Association) on campus were emailed regarding participation. In addition, flyers were posted in order to attract Bi-Co students to participate. Finally, the Haverford College student Facebook groups were used to post information regarding participation. Students who were enrolled in a Foundations of Psychology course and made up the human subject pool were given course credit, while other students not enrolled in the introductory course were given an online voucher for $10 to Amazon.
Design

The study examined capitalization experiences in two sections. For the first section, a coding system was developed to examine whether group differences existed for qualities that characterized the best and worst capitalization experiences. The second section was an experimental portion evaluating responses to vignettes.

The current study was a 2x3 between-subject factorial design using an online survey platform. The first independent variable was the cultural group, with two levels: Asian American (AA) and European American (EA). The second independent variable was capitalization condition, with three levels: Active-Constructive Individualistic (AC-I) ($n = 27$), Active-Constructive Collectivistic (AC-C) ($n = 27$), and Passive Constructive (PC) ($n = 25$).

The dependent variables of the experiment were Happiness, Self-esteem, Relationship Closeness and Relationship Satisfaction. The proposed cultural mediation variables were self-construal (i.e., independent, interdependent), harmony values, emotion expressiveness and modesty bias.

Procedure

Participants were told that they would be performing a study examining the behavior of sharing of good news with friends and family. After interested students emailed researchers confirming their eligibility (i.e., “I am a second generation Korean,”), accepted participants were sent a link that redirected them to the survey. The survey opened with a consent form for subjects to read and submit. Following their submission of the consent form, the questionnaire opened asking general demographic information such as sex, age, year in college, and race.
Open-ended response coding for positive and negative capitalization experiences. The first section of the survey presented the subject with two open-ended prompts. The first prompt read:

“Take a few minutes to think back on your BEST experience with sharing with another person about a personal positive event. This positive event may have been an achievement of some kind, something interpersonal or relationship-based, or any other positive occurrence that has personally affected you.”

The subject was then asked to describe the event, the person he or she shared the positive event with, what the person said or did after the subject shared the positive event, and how the response affected the subject. A coding manual was created to decipher and observe themes in the open-ended responses. After compiling all open-ended responses from the participants in a master document, the two researchers independently read the first 20 responses and categorized different recurring themes. For the first 20 responses, researchers met with each other after every set of 5 to discuss and settle inconsistencies, and refine the coding manual. Researchers also reconvened to calculate inter-rater reliability; Cohen’s Kappa (kappa) was calculated for categorical codes, while the Intraclass Correlation Coefficient (ICC) was calculated for the continuous codes. After coding the first 20 responses with the finalized manual and reaching an acceptable level of reliability, researchers proceeded to independently code the remaining responses. Researchers continued to consult with one another as well as the advisor regarding coding issues.

The categories of codes were developed based on influence from a number of different studies. Most obviously, Gable et al. (2004) was heavily relied on for the capitalization response codes. We incorporated our distinction of Active Constructive-Individualistic and Active Constructive-Collectivistic into the other possible capitalization responses. Several studies examined capitalization exchanges with various types of relationships; Gable et al. (2004) used
married couples as well as dating couples, while Smith & Reis (2012) compared romantic pairs and same-sex friends. For this reason, we decided it critical to distinguish whom the individual was choosing to share their positive experience with in case there were significant findings based on these differences.

Ultimately, we used the manual to code for the type of good news shared (i.e., achievement, interpersonal, network; kappa = 1.00), whom the individual shared their positive experience with (i.e., family, peers, romantic partner, mentor; kappa = 1.00), the type of capitalization response displayed by the other person (i.e., Active Constructive-Collectivistic, Active-Constructive-Individualistic, Passive Constructive, Active Destructive, Passive Destructive; kappa = .778), and how he or she felt about themself (ICC = .836) and how he or she felt about their relationship with the person (ICC = .836) following the positive capitalization experience on a scale from “very positive” to “very negative”.

The next prompt was identical to the first, but instead asked the subject to think back on their WORST experience sharing with another person about a personal positive event. The prompt read:

“Take a few minutes to think back on your WORST experience with sharing with another person about a personal positive event. This positive event may have been an achievement of some kind, something interpersonal or relationship-based, or any other positive occurrence that has personally affected you.”

Again, subjects were asked to describe the event they shared, with whom they shared, what the receiver said or did after hearing the subject share the positive event, and how the response affected the subject, this time negatively. Using the same coding manual, researchers coded for the type of good news shared (kappa = .44), whom the person shared the good news with (kappa = 1.00), what type of capitalization response he or she received (kappa = .64), and how the person felt about him or herself (ICC = .88) and how the person felt about his or her relationship
with the person (ICC = .92) after the negative capitalization attempt on a scale from “very positive” to “very negative”.

There was a superficially low kappa value (kappa = .44) due to asymmetrical matrices reflecting differential use of response categories, so a basic percent agreement statistic was calculated for additional information regarding reliability for TypeNeg. Because the calculated percent agreement came out to 90%, we decided our coding method was still adequately reliable.

Following the open-ended prompts, participants were presented with two groupings of questionnaires. The first grouping contained questionnaires about potential cultural mediating factors and the second grouping contained questionnaires addressing personality traits and mental health. Lastly, for the experiment portion, subjects randomly received one of three vignettes featuring capitalization responses for the subject to reflect on. After receiving a vignette, subjects were asked to complete a set of questions that addressed the dependent variables of the study.

Hypothetical Vignettes of Capitalization Responses. In the final experimental portion of the study, each participant was presented with one of three different scenarios that illustrated a capitalization response: Active Constructive-Individualistic (AC-I), Active Constructive-Collectivistic (AC-C), or Passive Constructive (PC). Participants received a vignette of a situation where they were capitalizing on an event with their friend, Cameron. The name of the friend, Cameron, was intended to be sexually ambiguous so as to control for any potential cross-sex interaction effect. Cameron’s response was randomized. The Active-Constructive Individualistic scenario is as follows:

You just found out you were offered an extremely competitive internship. You go to lunch with your friend, Cameron, and tell Cameron about your opportunity. Cameron says, “You are so talented! I am so proud of you and how hard you have worked! This will be so great for you and your job search next year!”
This particular response emphasizes the solo effort that contributed to the individual’s success and how the opportunity will affect the individual’s future. Cameron’s capitalization response mentions personality and talent, therefore highlighting individual traits, which are essential to an independent construal of self.

The second possible level of CR is the Active-Constructive Collectivistic scenario:

Cameron says, “Your parents will be so proud of you—I know they’ve been a huge support system! You’re giving the school such a great name!”

Cameron’s response in this prompt is much more collectivistically oriented; she/he emphasizes her/his friend’s role in the group (i.e., family and school) and how the good news will benefit the group as a whole. Cameron’s mention of how the individual’s parents have been a huge support system address how much effort others have put into the individual’s personal success, implying the shared success. The focus on group dynamics and group identity makes this response more collectivistic in nature.

The final scenario is the passive constructive response, which is the quiet, understated support:

It is clear that Cameron is pleased for you. Cameron smiles and nods.

This response contains no verbal cues, but exemplifies the calm, underplayed support that defines a passive-constructive capitalization response.

Materials

The first set of questionnaires measured cultural variables that could have potentially influenced the participant’s capitalization experiences. They addressed emotion expressiveness, self-construal, harmony values, and modesty behavior. These scales specifically measured the
variables that were expected to explain changes across dependent variables between AA and EA groups.

**Cultural Measures.** First, the Emotion Expressiveness Scale (EES) is a 17-item self-report scale that measures how individuals express emotions (King & Emmons, 1990, $\alpha = .76$). Responses are scored 1-6 (1-Never True, 6-Always True) with items such as *Even when I’m experiencing strong feelings, I don’t express them outwardly, and I am able to cry in front of other people.* It was designed as a self-report measure to examine how much people outwardly display their emotions.

The second scale was the Singelis Self-Construal Scale (SSCS; Singelis, 1994, $\alpha = .61$), which is a 24-item self-report scale measuring interdependence and independence, two kinds of self-construals linked with individualistic and collectivistic societies, respectively. Recall that the interdependent self-construal emphasizes connectedness and relationships, while the independent self-construal emphasizes an individual’s uniqueness and distinctness. It is scored 1-7 (1-Strongly Disagree, 7-Strongly Agree) with items like *Speaking up during class is not a problem for me* (Independence), and *I will sacrifice my self-interest for the benefit of the group I am in* (Interdependence).

Third was the Harmony Values Scale, which was utilized in the Wang et al. (2010) study examining cultural differences in daily support ($\alpha = .85$). The Harmony Values Scale contains two subscales of broader measures of Emotion Harmony and Group Harmony. The Emotion Harmony subscale measures the conservation of harmony through restraint of emotional expression that is focused on the ‘other’ (e.g., *It is more important to stay calm than to act on your true feelings*), while the Group Harmony subscale measures maintenance of harmony through control of social-communicative behavior that is also focused on the ‘other’ (e.g., *I go
along with what others want even when I would rather do something different). Responses are scored 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree).

Finally, the last scale that measured a potential cultural mediator was the Modest Behavior Scale (MBS; Chen, Bond, Chan, Tang, and Buchtel, 2009, α = .78). The MBS aims to examine the behavioral aspects of self-effacement, other enhancement and avoidance of attention seeking, and is a 32-item scale scored 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). It contains items such as I admit my own faults and apologize when someone criticizes me and I actively avoid asserting my privileges.

**Personality variables.** We determined it necessary to control specifically for neuroticism and openness using the Big Five Personality Inventory (Goldberg, 1990, α = .69), which is scored 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Examples of items on the Big Five are I see myself as someone who is curious about many different things and I see myself as someone who perseveres until the task is finished. Traits of openness and neuroticism were chosen due to the fact that people who are high in neuroticism (i.e.—tend to worry, be high strung) or low in openness may engage in capitalization differently because of more perceived negative interactions or less willingness to open up to others. That being said, all five traits (extraversion, neuroticism, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness) were measured in participants.

**Mental Health variables.** The final section of questionnaires measured mental health variables to serve as control factors. First the Social Interaction Anxiety Scale (SIAS; Mattick and Clarke, 1998, α = .93) is a 20-item self-report scale designed to measure social interaction anxiety. It is scored 0-4 (0-Not at all characteristic or true of me, 4-Extremely characteristic or true of me) with items like I become tense if I have to talk about myself or my feelings, and I worry about expressing myself in case I appear awkward.
Next, the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depressive Scale (CES-D; Radloff, 1977, α = .72) is a 20-item self-report scale measuring how often a person experiences symptoms associated with depression such as restless sleep, poor appetite and feeling lonely. It is scored 0-3 (0-Rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day) to 3-Most or all of the time (5-7 days)) and contains items such as *I felt that everything I did was an effort*, and *I had crying spells*.

In the final hypothetical vignette part of the survey (the experimental portion), participants were presented with the vignette involving their friend, Cameron. These vignettes were followed by a series of questions that addressed the dependent variables. Items were scored on a scale from 1-100 and addressed Self-esteem (e.g., *How valued do you feel?* 1-Not valued at all, 100-Extremely valued), Relationship Closeness (e.g., *How close do you feel to Cameron?* 1-Not close at all, 100-Extremely close), Happiness (e.g., *How good do you feel?* 1-Not good at all, 100-Extremely good), and Relationship Satisfaction (e.g., *How satisfied are you with your relationship with Cameron?* 1-Not satisfied at all, 100-Extremely satisfied).

**Results**

This section will begin by reporting the descriptive statistics for all main study variables. After presenting these statistics, information on the bivariate correlations among self-report variables and open-ended response coded outcome variables will be presented. Finally, we will examine the main effect of cultural group, the main effect of condition, as well as an interaction effect of race and condition on the dependent variables.

**Descriptive Statistics and Group Differences**

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used examine group differences on all variables for all participants (N = 79) as seen in Table 2.1.
Regarding personality traits, no significant difference was observed between cultural groups on extraversion, agreeableness, openness, and neuroticism. There was, however, a significant difference of measured conscientiousness such that European Americans (EA) \((M = 3.68, SD = .58)\) were higher than Asian Americans (AA) \((M = 3.44, SD = .48)\), \(F (1, 77) = 3.75, p = .057\).

The CES-D yielded no significant differences between EAs and AAs \((F (1, 77) = .44, p = .509)\) on depressive symptoms. Also, there were no significant differences between cultural groups on the Social Interaction Anxiety Scale \((F (1, 77) = .63, p = .429)\) or the Emotion Expression Scale \((F (1,77) = 2.16, p = .145)\).

On the Singelis Self-Construal Scale, EA’s \((M = 4.79, SD = .75)\) scored marginally higher on independent self-construal compared to AA’s \((M = 4.51, SD = .61, F (1, 77) = 3.02, p = .086)\), but there were no significant cultural group differences on the interdependent self-construal scale \((M = 4.86, SD = .61, F (1, 77) = .11, p = .740)\).

AAs \((M = 4.34, SD = 1.37)\) had significantly higher levels of emotion harmony compared to EAs \((M =3.65, SD =1.48, F (1, 77) = 4.46, p = .038)\). Finally, the Modesty Behavior scale yielded no significant differences between EAs and AAs \((F (1, 77) = 2.01, p = .160)\).

For the open ended responses on capitalization experiences, researchers coded the compiled responses into five variables: the type of positive event the participant shared (TypePos, TypeNeg), the person the participant told (WhoPos, WhoNeg), the type of response they received following their capitalization attempt (CapPos, CapNeg), how they felt about the relationship with the person following their capitalization attempt (RelPos, RelNeg), and finally, how they felt individually following the experience (SelfPos, SelfNeg). Researchers coded the first three variables (Type, Who, Cap) categorically with the established manual. Chi square tests
of independence were conducted to examine differences of the patterns of group by code compared to what is expected by chance alone.

Results showed a marginally significant effect of cultural group on TypePos, $X^2 (1, N = 79) = 2.86, p = .091$. EAs shared more achievement oriented events (+5.70%) and less interpersonal events (-28.90%) than would be expected by chance. Conversely, AAs shared less achievement events (-8.40%) and more interpersonal events (+42.20%) than would be expected by chance. There was also a significant effect of cultural group on WhoPos, $X^2 (3, N = 79) = 10.87, p = .012$. EAs shared their good news with family members more (+27.10%), peers less (-28.00%), romantic partners slightly more (+.90%), and mentors less (-66.40%) than would be expected by chance. AAs, however, shared their good news with family much less (-39.80), peers more (+41.10%), romantic partners less (-1.30%) and mentors more (+97.50%) than would be expected by chance.

The effect of race on Capitalization Response yielded insignificant results, $X^2 (1, N = 79) = 2.20, p = .138$. There was also no difference in the patterns of frequencies compared to expected frequencies between race for TypeNeg due to chance alone, $X^2 (2, N = 79) = .11, p = .945$. Lastly, there was a marginally significant effect between races for WhoNeg compared to expected frequencies due to chance alone, $X^2 (3, N = 79) = 7.46, p = .059$. In their most negative experience sharing good news with another person, EAs shared more with family (+10.10%) and peers (+7.70%) and less with romantic partners (-28.00%) and mentors (-100%) than would be expected by chance. AAs shared less with family (-14.90%) and friends (-11.40%) and more with romantic partners (+41.10%) and mentors (+146.90%). Finally, there was no significant difference seen between EAs and AAs in the patterns of group compared to what was expected by chance alone for CapNeg, $X^2 (1, N = 79) = 1.5, p = .221$. 
The coded continuous variables of RelPos, RelNeg, SelfPos and SelfNeg were measured on a scale of 1-5 (1- Very Positive, 2- Somewhat Positive, 3- Neutral, 4- Somewhat Negative, 5- Very Negative). One way ANOVAs revealed a marginal difference between AAs ($M = 1.78$, $SD = .75$) and EAs ($M = 1.49$, $SD = .72$) on SelfPos in the best experience sharing good news with another person, $F (1, 77) = 3.03$, $p = .086$. There were no significant differences between cultural groups on the remaining variables of RelPos ($F (1, 77) = .80$, $p = .374$), Rel Neg ($F (1, 77) = .12$, $p = .734$), or SelfNeg ($F (1, 77) = .26$, $p = .614$).

**Bivariate Correlations among self-report and open-ended response coded variables**

Bivariate correlations were calculated to analyze the relationship between self-report study variables for the full sample of participants. Table 3.1 depicts the full list of bivariate correlates for all study variables. However, this section focuses on the significant relationships between culture variables, personality variables, interpersonal variables, and intrapersonal variables. An interdependent self-construal was positively associated with agreeableness ($r(77) = .25$, $p = .024$), modest behavior ($r(77) = .55$, $p = .000$) emotional harmony ($r(77) = .37$, $p = .001$) and group harmony ($r(77) = .43$, $p = .000$). It was also positively correlated with Relationship Closeness ($r(77) = .34$, $p = .003$) but negatively correlated with extraversion ($r(77) = -.26$, $p = .021$). However, an independent self-construal was only positively associated with emotion expression ($r(77) = .41$, $p = .000$) and negatively associated with group harmony ($r(77) = -.26$, $p = .020$). Neither emotion harmony nor group harmony were found to be significantly associated with the dependent variables.

Emotion harmony was found to be negatively associated with extraversion ($r(77) = -.34$, $p = .002$) and emotion expression ($r(77) = -.34$, $p = .003$), but positively associated with modest behavior ($r(77) = .32$, $p = .004$) and social interaction anxiety ($r(77) = .26$, $p = .020$). Similarly,
group harmony was found to be negatively associated with extraversion \((r(77) = .45, p = .000)\) and emotion expression \((r(77) = -.36, p = .001)\), and positively associated with modesty \((r(77) = .36, p = .001)\) and anxiety \((r(77) = .38, p = .000)\).

Happiness, Self-esteem, Relationship Satisfaction and Relationship Closeness shared several significant associations. Agreeableness was significantly associated with all the variables: Happiness \((r(77) = .22, p = .048)\), Self-esteem \((r(77) = .27, p = .013)\), Relationship Satisfaction \((r(77) = .27, p = .015)\), and Relationship Closeness \((r(77) = .28, p = .011)\).

Happiness was found to be positively correlated with Self-esteem \((r(77) = .61, p = .000)\), Relationship Satisfaction \((r(77) = .50, p = .000)\), and Relationship Closeness \((r(77) = .50, p = .000)\). Relationship Satisfaction \((r(77) = .29, p = .009)\) and Relationship Closeness \((r(77) = .36, p = .001)\) were both found to have positive relationships with modest behavior.

**Effect of Cultural Group and Condition on Outcome Variables**

To examine how cultural group and condition affected the various outcome variables, we conducted a 2 (cultural group: Asian American vs. European American) x 3 (experimental condition: Active Constructive-Collectivistic vs. Active Constructive-Individualistic vs. Passive Constructive) analyses of covariance (ANCOVA). A test of between-subject effects was performed controlling for sex, age, independent self-construal, conscientiousness, and emotion harmony. All of these variables were controlled because they were variables found to be consistent across cultural group in the earlier one-way ANOVA analysis.

The main effect of experimental condition was significant for Relationship Satisfaction \((F (2, 76) =3.83, p < .05)\). In addition, there was a marginally significant main effect of condition for Self-esteem \((F (2, 76) = 2.52, p = .088)\). There was a marginally significant main effect of
race ($F(2, 76) = 3.15, p = .080$) indicating that AAs had lower means for Relationship Closeness ($M = 67.28, SD = 3.40$) compared to that of EAs ($M = 75.28, SD = 2.75$) (See Fig. 7).

Post-hoc analyses were performed to further examine the main effects of condition (AC-C, AC-I, PC) on the dependent variables. The LSD indicated that there was significant variation among conditions for Self-esteem; participants in the AC-I condition ($M = 86.68, SD = 3.21$) reported higher Self-esteem scores than participants in the PC condition ($M = 75.25, SD = 3.53; p < .010$) (see Fig. 6) For Relationship Satisfaction, the LSD showed a significant difference such that participants in the Active Constructive-Individualistic (AC-I) condition ($M = 88.02, SD = 4.38$) reported significantly higher Relationship Satisfaction than participants in the Passive Constructive (PC) condition ($M = 69.64, SD = 4.83; p = .010$) (see Fig. 5). In addition, the LSD also showed a marginally significant difference of Relationship Satisfaction between participants in the AC-C condition ($M = 77.57, SD = 4.24$) and participants in the AC-I condition ($M = 88.03, SD = 4.38; p = .053$).

Finally, an interaction effect of cultural group by condition was also observed for Relationship Satisfaction that was marginally significant ($F(2, 76) = 2.37, p = .10$). The LSD confirmed that the difference between EAs in the AC-I group ($M = 95.6, SD = 5.45$) and in the PC group ($M = 64.41, SD = 6.05$) was significantly larger than the difference between AAs in the AC-I group ($M = 80.44, SD = 6.89$) and in the PC group ($M = 74.88, SD = 7.13; p < .010$) (Fig. 3).

**Mediation Model**

We hypothesized several mediating variables (interdependence, independence, emotion expression, harmony values, and modest behavior) to explain cultural differences in the dependent variables. Because the prerequisite relationships for mediation were not met, such that
cultural group did not predict the cultural mediator variables or the DVs, we did not pursue mediation.

**Discussion**

The current study examined how the effects of constructive capitalization responses on various measures of individual and interpersonal well-being differed due to cultural group differences for European Americans (EAs) and Asian Americans (AAs) using a sample of undergraduate students from a small liberal arts college. Previous research on social support, a similar but different process than capitalization, has shown that AAs are much less likely to seek social support when dealing with negative events than EAs because they are more hesitant to do what they believe is bothering their social network with their own individual problems (Taylor et al., 2004). In the case of capitalization, or the sharing of good news with another person, the same patterns have been observed. Demir et al. (2013) found that American students reported more instances of sharing good news than their Turkish counterparts. We were interested in furthering findings in cultural differences in the capitalization process by examining more specifically the effects of different responses that one may receive after their attempts. The effects of various capitalization responses may vary as explained by cultural factors of self-construal, modesty behavior and emotion expressiveness.

Within our method of data collection, the online questionnaire had three major sections. The first part was comprised of surveys that were intended to address self-report cultural variables that could affect an individual’s capitalization experience. The second was an open-ended response section that asked participants to reflect on their best and worst experiences sharing good news with another person. Researchers created a coding manual with statistical
reliability to address themes in the responses from the sample. Finally, participants received one of three vignettes that represented different experimental conditions.

We predicted simple effects of cultural group such that EAs would be higher and AAs would be lower on levels of Happiness, Self-esteem, Relationship Satisfaction, and Relationship Closeness. Moreover, we anticipated differences between the Active Constructive responses (AC-C, AC-I) and the Passive Constructive responses. We predicted main effects of cultural group and condition and we hypothesized an interaction effect of cultural group and experimental condition on Happiness, Self-esteem, Relationship Satisfaction, and Relationship Closeness. It was hypothesized that AAs would experience more benefit from passive constructive capitalization responses than EAs. It was also hypothesized that AAs would prefer an active constructive-collectivistic response while EAs would prefer the active constructive-individualistic responses. While main effects of race and condition were found on certain dependent variables, their findings were supplementary to our initial hypotheses, which focused mostly on the interaction effect of race and condition on the dependent variables.

Cultural differences in self reported means

In the full sample of participants, while there was no difference between cultural groups in levels of extraversion, EAs had higher levels of conscientiousness compared to AAs. This is different than previous research and commonly held stereotypes that AAs are typically viewed as less extraverted and more conscientious than EAs (Lin, Kwan, Cheung, & Fiske, 2005). One reason for this disagreement is that given that the sample population was entirely from a small, academically rigorous liberal arts college, the EAs in the sample may represent levels of conscientiousness higher than what would be expected of a the general EA population. There was also a marginally significant difference in measures of independence such that EAs had
higher scores of independence compared to AAs, a finding which is supported by previous research on cultural differences in self-construals (Markus & Kitayama, 2010, Matsumoto et al., 1999, Matsumoto & Kupperbusch 2001). EAs are more socialized to an individualistic society and thus, are more likely to employ an independent self-schema. We expected AAs to be higher in interdependence because of their strongly interdependent East Asian values. Interestingly, there was no significant difference between EAs and AAs for measures of interdependence; this may also be attributed to the nature of our sample. Because Haverford College is a small, Quaker school whose atmosphere attracts individuals dedicated to strong values of community, participants of both cultures may align themselves with such values that are characteristic of an interdependent self-construal.

AAs had higher levels of emotion harmony compared to EAs; consistent with what was stated earlier, literature has found that harmony values can explain why AAs are less likely to use support when faced with negative or positive events, as compared to EAs who actively seek support. The idea that an individual feels and must act on pressure to restrain emotional expression for the sake of preserving the harmony of a group is a unique value seen in collectivistic cultures (Hsu, 1975, Wang et al., 2010).

Although we expected more significant findings from the coding variables from our open-ended responses, the findings were still notable. There was a significant difference between how AAs and EAs rated how they felt about themselves in their best experience sharing good news (SelfPos). AAs appear to derive more benefit than EAs from capitalizing on an event, specifically in how good it makes them feel about themselves. Interestingly, a similar pattern was seen for how participants rated how they feel about their relationship with the person they capitalize with after the positive capitalization attempt (RelPos). AAs had higher means for
RelPos than EAs, but the lack of significance in this particular difference may be due to low power reasons.

This finding is particularly interesting because there is reason to expect that capitalizing would be less effective for AAs. Due to concerns about disrupting harmony from the overexpression of emotions, AAs are likely to have a tendency to shy away from sharing good news (Friesen et al., 1972). Contrary to this belief, however, it appears that when AAs engage in capitalization with others, they do benefit from increased Happiness and Self-esteem, and more so than EAs. This is dissimilar to trends in social support seeking for negative events; studies have shown that when AAs do choose to seek social support, which in general occurs less than EAs, they tend to find it less helpful than EAs (Kim et al., 2004).

Results from the other coding variables, as seen from the chi square tests of independence, also disclosed more interesting findings that revealed patterns consistent with our earlier predictions. In a chi-square analysis of cultural group by TypePos, or the kind of good news shared in the best capitalization attempt, it was found that AAs shared less achievement (academic: *I received funding for a research project*, or goal oriented: *I got a competitive internship at Goldman Sachs for the summer*, etc.) events than EAs. The best capitalization experiences for AAs were overrepresented by interpersonal events (romantic: *I was asked out on a date by my crush* or family: *I went on an awesome family vacation to Africa*, etc.). The collectivistic values that can influence an individual’s upbringing may have caused AAs to focus on particular events that advance others or involve the group. It is interesting that when AAs are asked to recall sharing a positive event with someone, they are, either implicitly or explicitly, thinking of situations that involve others. The positive experience must be something that not only makes the individual happy, but also satisfies another person also involved. For EAs,
however, there were lower levels of interpersonal shared events. When EAs are asked to share good news, their first inclination appears to be to think of personal achievement events. This could be due to their naturally individualistic mindset which focuses on and celebrates individual accomplishments. Moreover, for TypeNeg, there was no pattern for either cultural group when capitalizing on the worst event; it appears that what the event was about is not linked to whether it was a positive or negative capitalization experience. Other factors such as the effect of the response on one’s feelings may be the more deciding factors.

There was a significant difference between cultural groups for whom the individual shared their good news with. AAs were going to peers and mentors to share positive events much more than EAs, who preferred to go to family members to share their good news. This could be due to the fact that AAs may see it as less threatening and more accessible to go to peers or mentors to share their good news. AAs may feel as though their parents, who in psychological literature have been described as having an “authoritarian” or “controlling” parenting style, are more critical and may find fault even within their achievements (Chiu, 1987, Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, & Fraleigh, 1987). Furthermore, AAs may feel as though friendships, especially with their EA classmates, are easier to threaten with what they consider bragging; threatening kinship ties with family members is much more risky. AAs may feel as though their peers are bound to react in a more positive way than their parents, who may be less approving of their “bragging” due to modesty bias; AAs may anticipate that their parents will attribute any success they share to situational factors and overall diminish the good news, so there is no point bothering them with their success.

Differences can be attributed to variances in parenting styles. Research has shown that East Asian parenting is focused primarily on training and improvement, more so than European
Capitulation Responses

American parenting. In a cross-cultural study using Chinese parents and European American parents, researchers found that a ‘training’ parenting style emphasizing filial piety was more important for Chinese parents than EA parents (Chao, 2000). Collectivistic societies employ parenting practices that have high levels of overprotection and control as a means to propagate cultural values (Shek, 1989). Parents believe as though such aspects of strictness in their rearing style is an organizational type of control that keeps the family running more smoothly and fosters family harmony (Lau & Cheung, 1987). Because AAs may have more pressure from their parents as a result of the ‘training’ style of upbringing and emphasis on academic excellence, they may be more wary to share good news if they think it is not noteworthy or significant enough. AAs may be more excited to share good news with their peers because they feel as though there is a higher chance of being validated with an enthusiastic response. Conversely, EA parenting emphasizes the importance of social skills over academics and a concern for building their child’s self-esteem (Chao, 1996). EAs may be more likely to share with their parents because they are their most obvious source of positive reinforcement. An upbringing with more Self-esteem boosting, warmth, and acceptance may allow EAs to see their parents as a reliable source of a highly enthusiastic response to their accomplishments or good news (Wu et al., 2002).

For EAs, most negative capitalization experiences occurred when they shared the good news with their peers. For AAs, both positive and negative capitalization experiences capitalizing occurred when they shared the good news with their peers. This may be explained by differences in emotion expression between the two groups. Because the sample population is specifically college students, these participants are in a new or somewhat new environment apart from their families and the culture they grew up with. Especially for international students,
individuals may engage in different behaviors at school than at home; as it pertains to the study, Asians and AAs who are more likely to avoid capitalization or generally high levels of emotion expression with family members in a collectivistic society, may engage in more capitalization and active emotion expression at school with their peers and mentors. In a western society as highly individualistic as the US, international Asians specifically may acculturate to the behaviors and values of the new culture and may believe they are acting accordingly. Despite the fact that they are experiencing both positive and negative feedback from their capitalization attempts, it is clear that they are still choosing to engage in such behaviors with people whom they believe to be more tolerant audiences.

**Associations between self-report variables, coding variables, and dependent variables**

Several significant positive and negative relationships were found to exist between the self-report variables. When all participants (N = 97) were examined together, interdependence was positively associated with agreeableness, modest behavior, emotion harmony, and group harmony, and negatively associated with extraversion. These patterns are consistent with the interdependent self-construal values; an interdependent self-construal emphasizes how an individual is represented by the reputation and identity of their collective. It can cause one to act more agreeable and with higher levels of modest behavior in order to maintain harmony values, which are so important to the non-confrontational nature of collectivistic societies (Markus & Kitayama, 2010). An individual who is low in agreeableness may be described as analytical or suspicious. Within a collective, feelings of suspicion may cause a rift in the harmony by increasing awkwardness because people are not affable and getting along. People who operate with an interdependent self-schema are likely concerned with the dynamics of the group and will go to certain lengths to ensure peace, even if it means suppressing their own opinions or feelings.
With higher levels of modest behavior and agreeableness, individuals may have a less extraverted nature, a trait that is seen more in independent self-schemas. Interdependence was also positively associated with Relationship Closeness. This association can also be explained and expected from the definition of an interdependent self-construal. In a collectivistic society where an interdependent self-schema exists, relationships are of the utmost importance because individuals are defined through one’s relationship with others (Matsumoto et al., 1999). Thus, if an individual lives by a significantly interdependent self-schema, he or she may be particularly serious and invested in his or her relationships.

The independent self-construal was found to have a positive association with emotion expression and a negative association with group harmony. These findings were expected and anticipated due to previous research on independence. Those who operate with an independent self-construal believe in the importance of defining themselves as individuals with opinions and needs. They are encouraged within their individualistic societies to emote freely and exercise autonomy (Harb & Smith, 2008). There is reason to believe that people who are concerned with influencing others and asserting themselves in society are likely less concerned with monitoring their social-communicative behavior to avoid conflict in their group. This may explain the negative relationship between the independent scores and group harmony.

Emotion harmony and group harmony, the subscales of the Harmony Values Scale, were both found to be negatively associated with extraversion and emotion expression, and positively associated with modest behavior and social anxiety. The desire to maintain harmony may provide a disincentive for individuals to be particularly extraverted or highly emotional. People who aim to avoid disagreements may be more likely to quash their own opinions and act modestly in order to keep the peace in their group. Moreover, this behavior may also explain the
positive association with social anxiety. By keeping one’s true feelings and opinions in and struggling to constantly maintain harmony may lead to a build up of anxiety, especially in social interactions (Wang et al., 2010).

Finally, it was found that all dependent variables were significantly and positively associated with each other. Any increase in Happiness in turn led to an increase in Self-esteem, Relationship Closeness and Relationship Satisfaction.

*Effects of cultural group and type of constructive capitalization responses on interpersonal and intrapersonal outcome variables*

A marginally significant main effect of cultural group found that in hypothetical scenarios, EAs reported feeling closer to their peer following a capitalization attempt compared to AAs. Findings align with research done by Demir et al. (2013), which discovered that US participants reported higher levels of friendship quality and Happiness than their Turkish peers. Researchers argued that an enthusiastic capitalization response among Turkish students may not have made a significant difference in their friendship experiences because to a certain extent, they expected their friends to respond in this manner. Friendships in a collectivistic society may hold more weight in that people expect to have a connection with their friends where they may not need to explain certain needs for social support (Kim et al., 2008). However, when U.S. students capitalize, they do so with the intent to improve their friendships. They may feel closer to their peers following a particularly positive capitalization response because it is more positive than the discloser’s initial expectations; interpersonal behavior in individualistic contexts are viewed as more freely given, or voluntary. EAs may have reported higher scores of Relationship Closeness following the capitalization attempt because they learn not to necessarily expect the high enthusiasm in the first place. This notion can arise because there is a general lack of
awareness of maintaining harmony values as seen in other cultures. EAs may be pleasantly
surprised by the positivity from the response and may feel as though their relationship with their peer has been bolstered by this perceived attention. Because these relationships are voluntary, any positivity from the peer would be considered by the EA as a reflection of that person being genuinely happy for you. Contrastingly, for relationships that are generally seen as entailing some sort of obligation, an enthusiastic response may not make a big difference in friendship experiences. Such a response is almost expected, so the reaction may be taken at less than face value (Demir et al., 2013; Kim et al., 2007).

From the hypothetical scenarios and data from post-hoc analyses, we observed another marginal main effect of condition (AC-I vs. AC-C vs. PC) on Self-esteem. Participants in the AC-I condition had higher scores of Self-esteem than those reported by participants in the PC condition. Because the AC-I response focuses specifically on the individual and their accomplishments (I am so proud of you and of how hard you have worked!), there is likely a boost in Self-esteem for the participant, especially in comparison to a response with absolutely no verbal cues and no direct acknowledgement as seen in the PC response. The mean difference between AC-C and PC was trending towards significance, suggesting that emotion expression and the use of verbal cues likely played a role in differentiating the effectiveness of Active Constructive responses compared to Passive responses.

We also found a significant main effect of condition on Relationship Satisfaction; participants in the AC-I condition felt more satisfied about their relationship with their peer following the hypothetical vignette capitalization attempt than participants in the PC condition. These findings can be explained by the nature of the response; participants likely felt more satisfied with the verbal cues highlighting their achievements in the AC-I responses as opposed
to no verbal cues at all in PC responses. There was also a marginally significant difference between participants in the AC-C condition and participants in the AC-I condition in their reports of satisfaction of their relationship with their peer. Despite the positivity of the response, the capitalizer may be left wanting more individual acknowledgement after hearing an AC-C response. The AC-C response may leave participants feeling as though the responder is putting the positive acknowledgement on the group rather than the individual. On the other hand, the AC-I response may cause participants to feel as though they are in a more worthwhile friendship because the response conveys attention and care for the capitalizer from the responder. This can in turn, lead to higher ratings of Relationship Satisfaction.

Although for AAs the preference was not as prominent, AC-I responses were ranked the highest across cultural groups for both EAs and AAs. Findings suggest that we may have underestimated the universal importance of individualistic trait emphasis. Since both AAs and EAs favored the AC-I response, following a capitalization attempt, people generally prefer responses that boost the individual and their unique qualities. The effect also speaks to how important the value of Self-esteem is for both culture groups. The universality may be explained by the nature of the sample that was recruited; because the undergraduate students are at an age where they are still impressionable by others, positive or negative affirmations can seriously affect confidence levels both socially and emotionally. Regardless of cultural group, students are particularly sensitive to whether or not people support their successes. Positive reinforcement in the form of an AC-I response may allow them to believe that others genuinely care about their achievements and their future. A different sample may not have had such a prominent preference for the AC-I response across cultural group.
Finally, we found a marginal interaction effect of cultural group by condition for Relationship Satisfaction. There was a marginally significant difference between how EAs in the AC-I group and EAs in the PC group rated Relationship Satisfaction than the difference between AAs in the AC-I group and AAs in the PC group. The significant differences by condition observed in the experiment were seen primarily in EA samples and not the AA samples. EAs appear to have a more distinct preference for type of capitalization response with the mean for AC-I being higher than the means of AC-C and PC: this supports our second hypothesis that EAs will find AC-I responses the most beneficial. Moreover, the lack of preference or significant difference in condition means for AAs suggest that while there is no distinct inclination for AC-C or PC responses as proposed by the hypotheses, AAs do not respond particularly negatively to either of the responses compared to the EAs. This allows us to assume that our findings were trending toward the direction we had hypothesized.

Limitations and Future Directions

Our study was subject to various limitations. First, our sample participants were primarily of a small, American, Quaker college. For both EAs and AAs, the particular environment may have caused the sample to inadequately represent a standard population. Certain values or behaviors may be unique to the undergraduate students who specifically chose the college for factors such as strong community ideals. Also, the recruitment criteria allowed not only Asians born internationally and attending school abroad, but also AAs who were born and raised in the U.S. These AAs may be more influenced by Western ideals or less exposed to traditional Asian values than expected. This limitation may have caused the lack of distinct construal differences between cultural groups in the results. As always, a larger sample size may have given more power to the statistical results or revealed new marginal findings.
In addition to the issues with sample size and population, there was also an issue with the organization of the experimental conditions. The situational vignettes may not have been distinctively AC-I, AC-C, or PC enough because they lacked detail or strength. Suggestions to improve the vignettes may be a longer interaction with multiple instances of the specific responses, or a video example. Also, the specific event used as the example in the vignettes was of the achievement type. This may speak to differences in capitalization behaviors between EAs and AAs, especially because we observed a significant difference for the type of capitalization event shared in the open-ended responses. An improved vignette could be a hypothetical interaction where more than one piece of good news is being shared between the two individuals. A more detailed conversation may allow participants to get a better idea of what a specific type of response looks and sounds like, and may lead to clearer opinions on whether they find it useful or not. Moreover, there may have been too few follow-up questions to the vignettes that were intended to address the dependent variables. Participants were asked only one question per dependent variable following the hypothetical vignettes; using the score of a single question as the ‘composite’ score of the dependent variables may have caused them to lack reliability and strength. It would have been advantageous to ask participants exactly which aspects of the capitalization responses increased feelings of Happiness or Self-esteem, and which aspects of the responses affected their interpersonal ratings so that participants were forced to consider the dependent variables in the scheme of the vignettes and increase reliabilities.

A suggestion for future replications or reexaminations may be to present participants with multiple video interactions of a variety of events so individuals can visualize body language or facial expressions that may be present with a certain capitalization response. For example, in the case of passive constructive responses, a written description alone may be misconstrued as the
person being disinterested or cold when they simply lack a verbal response. A clip of an interaction could allow participants to observe the nonverbal communication cues that are difficult to convey via text. Another way for researchers to delve further into the area of capitalization responses would be to bring the interaction within a laboratory setting. It would be interesting to bring same-culture dyads into the lab and instruct them to perform a capitalization interaction so that researchers can code their immediate responses as well as physiological responses that may arise due to stress from emotion suppression. Further, there should be examinations of capitalization experiences with diverse relationship pairs such as romantic couples or parent-child. It would also be interesting for individuals to compare their capitalization attempts with someone of the same culture and someone of a different culture to more explicitly observe differences in the process. Future research should focus on replicating these findings and further examining the potential mediating factors.

**Conclusion**

Cultural group and constructive capitalization response type, whether Active Constructive –Individualistic, Active Constructive-Collectivistic, or Passive Constructive, play a role in interpersonal and intrapersonal factors. The present study was the first of its kind to cross-culturally examine constructive capitalization responses and its effect on Happiness, Self-esteem, Relationship Closeness and Relationship Satisfaction. This study validates previous research that EAs had higher scores of independence compared to AAs, and that AAs had higher emotion expression than EAs. AAs were found to experience greater benefit from capitalization experiences than their EA counterparts. A main effect of race on Relationship Closeness was found as well as a main effect of condition on both Self-esteem and Relationship Satisfaction. An interaction effect of race and condition on Relationship Satisfaction was also discovered. More
research is required to further examine the cultural differences in perceptions of different capitalization responses and any potential implications.
References


Greenfield, P. M. (2010). Particular Forms of Independence and Interdependence Are Adapted to Particular Kinds of Sociodemographic Environment: Commentary on “Independence and


Wang, S., and Lau, A. Reciprocity and its influence on social support. Cultural differences in the psychological, behavioral, and biological effects of support activation.


Table 1.1 Frequency data for the sample (N = 79)

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### Table 2.1 Descriptive statistics and cultural group differences on study self-report variables

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* p ≤ 0.05, *** p ≤ 0.001, † p ≤ 0.10
Table 2.2 Descriptive statistics and cultural group differences on study self-report dependent variables for all participants (N = 79)

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* p ≤ 0.05, *** p ≤ 0.001, † p ≤ 0.10
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<tr>
<td>19. Self-Positive</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>-.19</td>
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<td>.14</td>
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<td>-.10</td>
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<tr>
<td>20. Relationship-Negative</td>
<td>.25*</td>
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<tr>
<td>21. Self-Negative</td>
<td>.25*</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.20</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* p ≤ 0.05, ** p ≤ 0.01, *** p ≤ 0.001, † p ≤ 0.10
Figure 1. Nonsignificant interaction effects of cultural group and condition on happiness

Figure 2. Nonsignificant interaction effect of cultural group and condition on self-esteem
Figure 3. Marginally significant interaction effect of cultural group and condition on relationship satisfaction

* $p \leq 0.05$, ** $p \leq 0.01$, † $p \leq 0.10$
Figure 4. Nonsignificant interaction effect of race and condition on relationship closeness
Figure 5. Significant main effect of condition on relationship satisfaction

* $p \leq 0.05$,  ** $p \leq 0.01$,  † $p \leq 0.10$
Figure 6. Marginally significant main effect of condition on self-esteem

* $p \leq 0.05$. ** $p \leq 0.01$. † $p \leq 0.10$
Figure 7. Marginally significant main effect of race on relationship closeness

* p ≤ 0.05, ** p ≤ 0.01, † p ≤ 0.10
Descriptive Codes

A. Type of good news
   a. Achievement category = 1 (specifically for the capitalizer. i.e., “I got into Haverford College”)
      i. Academic
         1. Grades/assignments
         2. Acceptance to school
      ii. Career/growth oriented (can be academically related--focus of response is on the future)
         1. Acceptance to job/internship
         2. Scholarships
      iii. Other
         1. Athletic accomplishments
         2. Any other achievements that don’t fall into the above categories (i.e., getting an audition, being published, awards, etc.)
   b. Interpersonal = 2 (EITHER the capitalizer or someone else e.g., “I was asked out on a date last week by a classmate”)
      i. Romantic
         1. Asked someone out/was asked out on a date
         2. New boyfriend/girlfriend
         3. Anniversary
      ii. Peer
         1. Friendships
         2. Fun experiences with friends/classmates/teammates
      iii. Family
         1. Family vacation
         2. News related to family (e.g., my sister got a job)
   c. Network =3 (e.g., “My sister got an award for her piece of writing”)

B. Who the good news is shared with (i.e., the capitalization responder)
   a. Family = 1
      i. Parents
      ii. Siblings
      iii. Extended family
   b. Peers = 2
      i. Friends/classmates
      ii. Teammates
      iii. Roommates
      iv. Other
         1. PAFs, CPs, Social Media accounts
         2. This category is reserved for instances of people who are not described as friends, but fall into the peer category
   c. Romantic = 3
      i. Boyfriend/girlfriend
      ii. Casual (e.g., hook up/crush)
d. Mentor = 4
   i. Professors
   ii. Coaches
   iii. Advisors
   iv. Deans
   v. Other authority figures

C. Capitalization Response (Gable responses plus our AC-C/AC-I distinctions)
   a. Active Constructive-Collectivistic = 1: enthusiastic support that focuses on the
capitalizer’s relationships, or how the good news will benefit a group as a whole;
talk of shared success
   b. Active Constructive-Individualistic = 2: enthusiastic support that emphasizes
the individual’s success, mention of personality or talent, highlighting individual
traits
      i. “Congratulations! I am so happy for you”
   c. Passive Constructive = 3: quiet, understated support (e.g., non-vocal cues that let
the capitalizer know that the person is happy for them/proud, smiles, hugs, nods,
handholding, etc.)
      i. Can also be misinterpreted as a negative response--minimal response that
is interpreted as a lack of response (e.g., “Oh, that’s cool)
   d. Active Destructive = 4: quashing the event (e.g., giving reasons why the positive
event isn’t positive, diminishing the importance of the event/positivity of the
event)
   e. Passive Destructive = 5: ignoring the event, not acknowledging the capitalization
attempt
      i. Changes the subject right away

D. Dependent Variables
   **The positive and negative definitions are simply examples of things to consider when coding
for positive or negative relationship/self DV’s **
   ** If there is a lot of back and forth between positive and negative feelings regarding the
response, stick with neutral
      e.g., “I was surprised and disappointed to see that she didn’t share the same enthusiasm as
I had. I didn’t feel any less excited about the trip; I just felt upset that she wasn’t as
excited about it as I was, and I guess maybe she made me a little bit more nervous about
going there alone. Eventually she came around and was happy for me, but I kind of had
to pull it out of her” (Rel = 4 or 5, Self = 3 because she keeps going back and forth about
how it made her feel)
   ** The relationship/self may not be explicitly mentioned, but rather, it may be implied. In this
case, do not assume negativity or positivity. Score as neutral.

   a. Relationship: How positive or negative do you feel about your relationship with
the person with whom you shared your positive event with?
      i. 1 = Very positive
      ii. 2 = Somewhat positive
      iii. 3 = Neutral (no mention of feelings about relationship)
iv. 4 = Somewhat negative
v. 5 = Very Negative

Positive
Closeness: feeling closer to the person you shared with
Satisfaction: feeling content with the strength of your relationship with the person
Support

Negative
Disappointment: feeling upset/let down about the relationship after sharing the positive event due to the response given
Distance: feeling alienated/distant from the person whom you are sharing with
Frustration: anger/annoyance over the relationship due to the person’s response

b. Self: How positive or negative do you feel about yourself after receiving a response from the person with whom you shared your good news with?
i. 1 = Very positive
ii. 2 = Somewhat positive
iii. 3 = Neutral (no mention of feelings about self)
iv. 4 = Somewhat negative
v. 5 = Very Negative

Positive
Happiness: feeling happier about yourself after sharing the positive event with someone
Self-esteem: feeling better about yourself/proud of yourself as the result of sharing a positive event with someone
Better about the event having shared with someone else

Negative
Anxiety: feeling stressed about yourself/the positive event because of the response you receive
Disappointment: feeling down on yourself after the response given
Big Five-Factor Inventory (BFI)

Below are a number of characteristics that may or may not apply to you. For example, do you agree that you are someone who likes to spend time with others? Please write a number next to each statement to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with

1------------------------2------------------------3------------------------4------------------------5

strongly disagree somewhat neither agree somewhat strongly agree

disagree nor disagree agree

I see myself as someone who...

___ 1. Is talkative
___ 2. Tends to find fault with others
___ 3. Does a thorough job
___ 4. Is depressed, blue
___ 5. Is original, comes up with new ideas
___ 6. Is reserved
___ 7. Is helpful and unselfish with others
___ 8. Can be somewhat careless
___ 9. Is relaxed, handles stress well
___ 10. Is curious about many different
___ 11. Is full of energy
___ 12. Starts quarrels with others
___ 13. Is a reliable worker
___ 14. Can be tense
___ 15. Is ingenious, a deep thinker
___ 16. Generates a lot of enthusiasm
___ 17. Has a forgiving nature
___ 18. Tends to be disorganized
___ 19. Worries a lot
___ 20. Has an active imagination
___ 21. Tends to be quiet
___ 22. Is generally trusting
___ 23. Tends to be lazy
___ 24. Is emotionally stable, not easily upset
___ 25. Is inventive
___ 26. Has an assertive personality
___ 27. Can be cold and aloof
___ 28. Perseveres until the task is finished
___ 29. Can be moody
___ 30. Values artistic, aesthetic experience
___ 31. Is sometimes shy, inhibited
___ 32. Is considerate and kind to almost everyone
___ 33. Does things efficiently
34. Remains calm in tense situations
35. Prefers work that is routine
36. Is outgoing, sociable
37. Is sometimes rude to others
38. Make plans and follows through with them
39. Gets nervous easily
40. Likes to reflect, play with ideas
41. Has few artistic interests
42. Likes to cooperate with others
43. Is easily distracted
44. Is sophisticated in art, music, or literature
Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale

For each of the following items, please circle the appropriate number to indicate how often you felt or behaved this way during the past week.

1 – Rarely or none of the time (less than 1 Day)
2 – Some or a little of the time (1-2 Days)
3 – Occasionally or a moderate amount of time (3-4 Days)
4 – Most or all of the time (5-7 Days)

1. I was bothered by things that usually don’t bother me.
2. I did not feel like eating; my appetite was poor.
3. I felt that I could not shake off the blues, even with help from my family or friends.
4. I felt that I was just as good as other people.
5. I had trouble keeping my mind on what I was doing.
6. I felt depressed.
7. I felt that everything I did was an effort.
8. I felt hopeful about the future.
9. I thought my life had been a failure.
10. I felt fearful.
11. My sleep was restless.
12. I was happy.
13. I talked less than usual.
15. People were friendly.
16. I enjoyed life.
17. I had crying spells.
18. I felt sad.
19. I felt that people dislike me.
20. I could not get “going.”
Social Interaction Anxiety Scale

Using the 5-point scale below, please indicate the extent to which you believe that the statement characterizes you, placing the appropriate number on the line preceding that item. Please be open and honest in responding.

This statement describes me…

1. I get nervous if I have to speak with someone in authority (teacher, boss, etc.)
2. I have difficulty making eye-contact with others.
3. I become tense if I have to talk about myself or my feelings.
4. I find difficulty mixing comfortably with the people I work with.
5. I tense-up if I meet an acquaintance in the street.
6. When mixing socially, I am uncomfortable.
7. I feel tense if I’m alone with just one other person.
8. I am at ease meeting people at parties, etc.
9. I have difficulty talking with other people.
10. I find it easy to think of things to talk about.
11. I worry about expressing myself in case I appear awkward.
12. I find it difficult to disagree with another’s point of view.
13. I have difficulty talking to attractive persons of the opposite sex.
14. I find myself worrying that I won’t know what to say in social situations.
15. I am nervous mixing with people I don’t know well.
16. I feel I’ll say something embarrassing when talking.
17. When mixing in a group, I find myself worrying I’ll be ignored.
18. I am tense mixing in a group.
19. I am unsure whether to greet someone I only know slightly.
**Emotion Expressiveness Questionnaire**

Using the 1-7 scale below please indicate the extent to which each statement is characteristic of you.

1 ---------------- 2 -------------- 3 ----------- 4 ------------- 5 ------------- 6 -------------- 7
not at all characteristic extremely characteristic

_____ 1. I often tell people that I love them.

_____ 2. When I am angry people around me usually know.

_____ 3. I often touch friends during conversations.

_____ 4. I laugh a lot.

_____ 5. People can tell from my facial expressions how I am feeling.

_____ 6. Whenever people do nice thing for me, I feel “put on the spot” and have trouble expressing my gratitude.

_____ 7. When I really like someone they know it.

_____ 8. I apologize when I have done something wrong.

_____ 9. Watching television or reading a book can make me laugh out loud.

_____ 10. If someone makes me angry in a public place, I will “cause a scene.”

_____ 11. I often laugh so hard that my eyes water or my sides ache.

_____ 12. If a friend surprised me with a gift, I wouldn’t know how to react.

_____ 13. When I am alone, I can make myself laugh by remembering something from the past.

_____ 14. I always express disappointment when things don’t go as I’d like them to.

_____ 15. My laugh is soft and subdued.

_____ 16. I show that I like someone by hugging or touching that person.
Singelis Self-Construal Scale

Please write a number next to each statement to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement.

1 stronglly disagree 2 neither agree nor disagree 3 disagree 4 nor agree 5 agree 6 strongly agree

1. I have respect for the authority figures with whom I interact.
2. I’d rather say “No” directly, than risk being misunderstood.
3. It is important for me to maintain harmony within my group.
4. Speaking up during a class is not a problem for me.
5. My happiness depends on the happiness of those around me.
6. Having a lively imagination is important to me.
7. I would offer my seat in a bus to my professor.
8. I am comfortable with being singled out for praise or rewards.
9. I respect people who are modest about themselves.
10. I am the same person at home that I am at school.
11. I will sacrifice my self-interest for the benefit of the group I am in.
12. Being able to take care of myself is a primary concern for me.
13. I often have the feeling that my relationships with others are more important than my own accomplishment.
14. I act the same way no matter who I am with.
15. I should take into consideration my parents’ advice when making education/career plans.
16. I feel comfortable using someone’s first name soon after I meet them, even when they are much older I am.
17. It is important to me to respect decisions made by the group.
18. I prefer to be direct and forthright when dealing with people I’ve just met.
19. I will stay in a group if they need me, even when I’m not happy with the group.
20. I enjoy being unique and different from others in many respects.
21. If my brother or sister fails, I feel responsible.
22. My personal identity independent of others is very important to me.
23. Even when I strongly disagree with group members, I avoid an argument.
24. I value being in good health above everything.
Harmony Values Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8 items of Social Harmony and Emotion Harmony subscales</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SocHar1 (Avoid argument)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SocHar2 (What others want)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SocHar3 (What others expect)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SocHar4 (Opinion)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EmoHar5 (Hold emotions inside)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EmoHar6 (Stay calm)–revised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EmoHar7 (Strong expression)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EmoHar8(Suffer quietly) ®</td>
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*Note.* Responses are rated on a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) scale.

® Denote reverse scored items.
Modest Behavior Scale

Below are some statements on social behavior. Please read each statement and circle the point on the scale that you feel is most appropriate in describing your behavior.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Usually praise other people</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Not praise one’s own strengths</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Often shift the conversation to talk about myself</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Wear clothes that draw people’s attention</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Attribute success to luck rather than one’s own ability in front of others</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Avoid causing inconvenience to others</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Lead people around me to acknowledge my superiority</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Politely ask others to correct me when I express my own opinions</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Avoid showing off in front of peers</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Actively avoid asserting my privileges</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Not praise myself in an attention-getting way</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Thank the person who criticizes me</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Admit my mistakes and apologize when criticized</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>Treat everyone equally regardless of status.</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>Emphasize others’ contributions when I am praised</td>
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<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Ask more questions and listen to others’ opinions attentively</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Avoid saying too much about myself</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Assert my needs when in conflict with others</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Admit and correct my mistakes after doing something wrong</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Showing off my expensive accessories</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Deny my own strengths in front of others</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Try to defend myself when I am</td>
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<td>23.</td>
<td>Sincerely accept others’ suggestions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>Say thank you when praised</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>Speak out less; listen to others’ opinions more</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>Not show off</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>Accept differences with others</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>Find and appreciate others’ strengths</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Post awards where people can see</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>Deny my strengths when praised</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>Wear revealing clothing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>Follow tasks and demands</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>Fulfill duties to friends and family</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>Finish workload on time and in an adequate manner</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>Give credit to others</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>36.</td>
<td>Say polite words and phrases to my companions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37.</td>
<td>Tell others about my accomplishments</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38.</td>
<td>Encourage someone else take the lead</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.</td>
<td>Talk myself down to downplay my talent</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>