Well done!
The influence of compliments on performance.

Merel Zandstra

In collaboration with Nadira Quamila

Abstract

This research examines if people can be motivated and improve their task performance by receiving positive feedback, i. e. compliments. Nevertheless we also investigate the effects of cultural background, compliment type and compliment reaction on task performance. Participants (N = 88) fulfilled two creativity task and received a interpersonal compliment or a performance compliment. We used a 2 x 2 model with cultural background (individualistic vs. collectivistic) and compliment type (interpersonal compliment vs. performance compliment). This research suggests that compliment reaction influence task performance. Participants who accepted the compliment, scored higher on performance than participants who did not accept the compliment. Implications of these study and possible insights for future research are discussed.

Inhoudsopgave

Introduction

Just look on the bright side of life! This statement represents what some critics believe is the central theme of positive psychology. Positive psychology is aimed at helping individuals, communities and societies to flourish (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Traditionally psychology has focused on understanding and predicting negative outcomes, for example by means of mapping psychological disorders, investigating conflict management and preventing non-cooperation. Positive psychology, however, strives to understand how growth and progress can be nurtured, rather than how decline or failure can be prevented. With the current research project, we aimed to investigate one aspect of this positive approach; how people can be motivated to improve their performance by receiving positive feedback instead of negative feedback. We proposed the intuitively compelling act of paying a compliment as a potentially powerful mechanism to reach this goal. Not only positive feedback do we take into account in this research, also cultural background (collectivistic and individualistic culture) and the type of compliment are important factors. This leads us to our final research question: "What is the effect of different types of compliments on people's acceptance of these compliments and subsequent performance, considering differences in cultural background?"

1.Background

In organizational settings, the role of performance feedback on human behaviors has focussed attention. Feedback is defined as "actions taken by (an) external agent (s) to provide information regarding some aspect (s) of one´s task performance" according to Kluger & Denisi (1996, p. 255).

Podsakoff and Farh (1989) discussed in their article the increasing role of performance feedback in organizational behaviour. According to Lam, Derue, Karam & Hollenbeck (2011) feedback in organizational settings is an important element of learning and performance improvement for various reasons. First, feedback influences motivation, by supplying information about how individuals' performance compares to their goals. Second, feedback makes people more conscious about how much effort is desired for an effective performance. Finally, feedback provides information about the usefulness of task strategies, which help people to select the best behaviour and strategies to improve their performance (Lam et al., 2011). According to Belschak & Den Hartog (2009), do employees gain learning and knowledge of results by receiving feedback. Ilgen en Davis (2000) state that if you would like to improve task performance of employees, receiving feedback is an important factor.

However a lot of research on feedback interventions and task performance has been done already (Belschak & Den Hartog, 2009, Van Dijk & Kluger, 2011), one general proposition of the effectiveness of feedback interventions has not been given (DeNisi & Kluger, 2000, Kluger & Denisi, 1996). Kluger & DeNisi (1996) found out that feedback interventions do not always lead to an effect on improving performance. In some conditions there is no effect on performance and in other conditions performance could even attenuate by feedback interventions.

6

Most of research to feedback interventions and it is effect on performance has been done by using negative feedback, which focusses on what could have been better. Negative feedback emphasizes the competence or thing where someone is not (really) good at, with the intention to improve that competence. Previous research shows that receiving negative feedback can have advantageous results as well, like empowering task learning and goal striving (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996). This kind of investigations has focussed on the traditional way of psychology and thus negative feedback.

Not so much research has been done with positive feedback. We do know that individuals who received positive feedback are more satisfied than individuals who received negative feedback (Podsakoff & Farh, 1989). Also, individuals observe their positive feedback to be more precise than their negative feedback (Podsakoff & Farh, 1989). And precise feedback is another important when receiving feedback, together with frequent positive feedback. Illies & Judge (2005), indicated that task performance and learning development improves when individuals receive frequent positive feedback. Thurlings, Vermeulen, Bastiaens and Stijnen (2013) found out feedback given immediately, which is specific, justified and positive is the most effective strategy for changing behaviour. This changing behaviour could lead to increasing performance. Unfortunately, the relationship between positive feedback and performance has not been the main focus in subsequent research. This is regrettable, why would we try to improve our pitfalls instead of working from our qualities and enhancing our talents, things where we are already good at?

1.Cultural background

Another goal of this research was the effect of cultural background and the influence of culture on compliments. People from different cultures could react differently towards the same compliment. Where workteams used to be quite similar according to the cultures, nowadays workteams consist of different kind of cultures, gender, age, race, and religions. So by measuring the effect of compliments on performance, we allowed for people and their different cultural backgrounds and thus potentially different reaction towards compliments. In this paper we focussed on the difference between individualistic cultures and collectivistic cultures. Herbert (1986) indicated that illustrating the concept of politeness strategies in different cultural groups is essential, since compliments sometimes trigger conflicts between compliment giver and compliment receiver when they do not understand the function of complimenting.

Some research across different cultures and their behaviour in giving and receiving compliments has been done already. In individualistic cultures, the main focus is to achieve personal goals (Georgas, 1989), whereas maintenance of social norms and performance of social duties is the main focus of collectivistic cultures (Triandis, 1990a). Yu (2003) demonstrated that between different cultural groups there are some common concepts about politeness and compliment responses. Matsuura (2004) investigated compliment reaction between American participants and Japanese participants. Matsuura (2004) concluded that Japanese participants were more likely to refuse or evade compliments, whereas American participants could easily and directly accept compliments they received. The study of Woonik and Sangdo (2011) shows that accept strategies when receiving a compliment is often used by American participants (83%) than by Korean participants (44%). According to Matsuura (2004) and Woonik et al.,

(2011), there is evidence for difference in receiving a compliment between individualistic culture (American participants) and collectivistic cultures (Japan and Korean participants). Based on the literature mentioned above we conclude the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1a: Participants with an individualistic cultural background are better in accepting a compliment in comparison with participants with a collectivistic cultural background.

Markus and Kitayama (1999) showed that individuals in the Western Culture are more attentive to positive information, like success outcomes and positive features of the self. Hamamura, Meijer, Heine, Kamaya, and Hori's (2009) found that Japanese participants are more attentive to negative information or failure outcomes. Based on the literature mentioned above we conclude the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1b: Participants with an individualistic cultural background appreciate more receiving a compliment in comparison with participants with a collectivistic cultural background.

2. Type of compliments and performance

There are many articles about feedback and performance, specifically about giving negative feedback and performance.

Less research has been done about giving positive feedback, compliments and performance. In this investigation we measured positive feedback, in other words, compliments and the effect of performance. According to Holmes (1988) a compliment is defined as "a speech which explicitly or implicitly attributes credit to someone other than the speaker, usually the person addressed, for some good (characteristic, skill) which is

positively valued by the speaker and the hearer". Although meta-analytical has demonstrated positive effects of compliments on interpersonal liking and performance, it is still relatively unclear whether and trough which processes these effects extend to performance (Gordon, 1996).

We measured two kinds of compliments, namely 'Well done! You're such a creative person' or 'Well done! You did such a great job'. The first compliment is an interpersonal compliment, it has nothing to do with the task. The second compliment is a performance compliment, this type of compliment is related to the task. We conclude the following hypotheses. Holmes (1987) found out that there is a vast majority of compliment topics; appearance, ability or performance, possessions and some personality traits. Nevertheless topics of the compliments given in the study of Holmes (1987) are mostly the appearance and ability or performance topic, namely 82%. Based on the literature mentioned above we conclude the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: Participants who receive a performance compliment score higher on performance than participants who receive a interpersonal compliment.

3.Reaction to compliments

There are different ways in how to react when receiving a compliment. Some people are able to accept a compliment, where others prefer to reject the compliment or some would rather deflect or evade a compliment (Holmes, 1987b). Holmes (1987b) designed a model which clarifies the three different kinds of reactions towards compliments (see Appendix C). Every category - accept, reject and deflect or evade - has several sub-categories with transparent labels. If people are able to accept a compliment they accept the credit which is attributed by a compliment, in an explicit or implicit

manner. An example of accepting the compliment could be; Thanks, yes, smile or I think it is lovely too. People who suggest that they don't agree with the compliment given by the researcher are rejecting a compliment. An example of rejecting a compliment could be stating "you don't really mean that". In the end, people who aren't able to accept the attribution of credit of the compliment will deflect or evade the compliment by avoiding it. By deflecting a compliment people shift the credit elsewhere and by evading the compliment people avoid the acknowledgement of the positive affect of the compliment. An example of deflecting or evading a compliment could be a response like "I bought it at a really cheap store".

In this paper, we are interested in the effect of people's reaction towards compliments. Does the reaction to compliments have an influence on their professional performance? Do people who are able accept a compliment cope differently with the same compliment than people who reject or deflect the compliment and does this lead to different results in performance? Geddes and Konrad (2003) investigated reactions to performance feedback. They concluded that people in an organizational setting who accept task related feedback, are more likely sustain and adapt their behaviour in such a way that it will improve future performance. Ilgen and Davis (2000) indicated that employees who receive an evaluation of their performance deficits, may react adversely when they reject the feedback of their supervisor. Due to this kind of response, there could be a lack of improvement of their performance because of avoiding the suggested or required behaviour adjustments (Geddes and Konrad, 2003). Based on the literature mentioned above we pose the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3a: Participants who accept a compliment score higher on performance than participants who deflect or reject a compliment.

Hypothesis 3b: Participants who deflect a compliment score higher on performance than participants who score high at reject a compliment.

4.Performance

This research focusses on the effect of positive feedback on creative performance. In this study we used creativity tasks, which could be an important element in organizational settings. Kim & Choi (2017) found that creativity is a critical contributor to the success of an organization, due to the turbulent business environment which includes new technologies, competitor strategies and changes in costumer tastes and preferences. According to Baas (2010), creativity serves several functions in organizations. First of all, Runco (2004) concludes that our capacity to be creative contributes to the ability to adapt to changing circumstances in our environment and makes it easier to handle threats, challenges, and opportunities we encounter. Subsequently, Woodman, Sawyer, & Griffin (1993) found that high levels of creativity are critical to successful entrepreneurship as well as organizational effectiveness and survival. Finally, creativity forms a means to achieve functional goals like winning heated conflicts and debates (De Dreu & Nijstad, 2008). Creativity will contribute to a higher performance due to the fact that highly creative people dare to take risks, come up with new ideas for achieving goals, have wide interests, a greater openness to new experiences, have a cognitive flexibility (Zou and George, 2001, Kim and Choi, 2017). Concluding, this leads us to the main research question:

What is the effect of different types of compliments on people's acceptance of these compliments and subsequent creativity performance, taking into account differences in cultural background?"

Method

1.Participants

The participants were recruited via the Faculty of Social Sciences of Leiden University, and the target group included both Dutch and international students. In total, $N = 133$ people were recruited for this experiment. Two people indicated that they did not receive a compliment at all from one of the researchers. Because receiving a compliment was necessary in this investigation those two participants were excluded. From the $N = 131$ participants left there were $N = 28$ participants excluded because they did not accomplish the second task in the right way. From the $N = 103$ participants left, another $N = 4$ participants showed no reaction when receiving a compliment, which means $N = 99$ participants left. Unfortunately 11 participants indicated that they did not receive one of the two compliments, but another compliment or one's that related to our compliments. Because they indicated they did not receive one of our compliments, we decided to exclude these participants as well. This means that in the end there were 88 participants analyzed in this research. From the $N = 88$ participants consist of 82 females and 6 males. The mean age of the participants was $M = 20.57$, ranging from 18-34 years, $SD = 3.11$. The group included $N = 53$ Dutch students and $N = 35$ international students.

The participants ranged from first year students to master students, most of the participants were psychology students, namely 58%. First-year students received an extra

credit for their participation in the experiment, whereas all the other students received financial compensation in return for their participation.

2.Design

In this experiment we used a 2 (individualistic vs. collectivistic) x 2 (interpersonal compliment vs. performance compliment) design. This means that there were four conditions or groups, namely the individualistic and interpersonal compliment condition, the individualistic performance compliment condition, the collectivistic interpersonal compliment condition and the collectivistic performance condition.

3.Procedure

The participants were recruited via an advertisement at the university bulletin board and via a face-to-face invitation from the experiment leaders at the university. The experiment was held in a quiet area, to eliminate any form of distraction. The participants were welcomed in a friendly manner and were asked to fill out an informed consent form (see Appendix A), in a room without other people present. At the inform consent form we explained to the participants that they were going to participate in an experiment about personality and creativity. The experiment took approximately 30 minutes. After filling out the form, they received a form with instructions for the first task. The first task as well the second task were completed on paper.

After finishing the first assignment, participants were requested to hand in the results at the experiment leaders' desk, situated in another room. The experiment leader assessed the first task and she gave a compliment to the participant. The participant, had been randomly assigned to the interpersonal compliment condition or the task-performance condition, received a corresponding compliment. The interpersonal

compliment was; Well done! You're such a creative person! The performance

compliment was; Well done! You did a creative job! It was the experiment leaders'

responsibility to convey the compliments carefully, to not raise any suspiciousness

amongst the participants, which could lead to less reliable results. After the participants

got a compliment, they received an instruction form for the second task. They were

requested to go back to the room where they completed the first task in order to complete

the second task.

In the experiment leader room a camera recorded the reaction of the participant

upon receiving the compliment. This camera recorded the verbal expression (rejection of,

deflection from or acceptance of the compliment) as well as the nonverbal expression of

the participants. Monitoring the kind of reaction participants express upon receiving the

compliment was essential, because the manner in which a participant dealt with a

compliment could influence subsequent behavior. It could be hard for the experiment

leaders to recognize the type of reaction towards a compliment by just the verbal

expression. A combination of the verbal and nonverbal expression helped the experiment

leaders to assign the reaction of the participant to correct category, namely acceptation,

rejection and deflection.

After the participants completed the second task participants were again requested

to hand in the results in the experiment leaders' room. At that time they did not receive a

compliment. Subsequently, the participants were asked to fill out three separate digital

questionnaires, the result of which helped us determine mood, motivation and self-

esteem. Next, we performed a manipulation check, to check whether the compliments

were received in the way they were supposed to. Lastly participants completed a digital

form with general questions about demographic data, such as gender, age, nationality, place of birth, parents' place of birth, etcetera (see Appendix D).

4.Task

The tasks we used in this study were creativity tasks. These creativity tasks were developed by J. P. Guilford in 1967 and are called the Alternative Uses Tasks. The first task served only one purpose: for the researchers so they were able to give a compliment to the participants upon completion of the task. The first task was to list as many objects as possible in five minutes that could be described by the adjective at the top of the page. The adjective in the first task was soft. At the table there was a timer which alarmed when the five minutes are over.

The second task, participants were asked to generate as many uses as possible for a noun. For example, various uses for a building block could include a doorstop, a stand for a planter, a base for shelves, a crude weapon, or an athletic weight. The particular object in this task was a car tire. This task required creativity and open-mindedness. We used these results, to measure the participants' performance. Participants who could come up with more and a variety of ideas to use the particular object, score higher on creativity according to the Alternative Use Task. In our study means a higher score on creativity thus a better performance. At the table there was a timer which alarmed when the five minutes are over.

5.Manipulation check

In this research we used compliments as manipulation. We used two types of compliments, namely interpersonal compliments and performance compliments. The interpersonal compliment we gave to our participants was: 'Well done! You're such a

creative person'. The performance compliment was 'Well done! You did such a creative

job'. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the two compliments. For the results

to be valid, it was essential to be certain that the purpose of this research was unknown to

the participants during the tasks, that all the participants indicated they received a

compliment and that they indicated they received or the interpersonal- or the performance

compliment. Hence, to check whether the compliments were received in the way they

were supposed to, we performed a manipulation check. This check took place after

completing the three questionnaires. This prevented suspiciousness on the participants'

side. After the tasks were done, firstly we asked, by means of an open question, whether

the participants knew what we aimed to measure. Next, we asked some open and some

multiple-choice questions about the compliments they received from the experiment

leader. In the manipulation check we also asked if the participants appreciated the

compliment, how it made them feel and to what extent they thought the compliment was

credible (see Appendix B for an overview of the questions from manipulation).

6. Measurements

Performance. To measure performance, we looked at the results of the tasks. The

number of ideas generated were used as a measure for performance: the more

ideas generated, the higher the performance. A higher score at creativity meant better

performance. Performance was divided into two variables, namely performance word

count and performance categories. Dividing the results was used in Guilford's Alternative

Uses Task (1967) as well. Performance word count was measured via the fluency

scoring component and performance category was measured via flexibility. Fluency is

adding up all the responses and flexibility is dividing the responses in different categories

according to Guilford's Alternative Uses Task (1967). In this study we counted the number of words from task 1 and task 2 and standardized them. By allocating the words into categories and counted the number of categories of task 1 and task 2 again. The categories we used were; car, swing, sport/playing games, accessories, art, useful tools, garden decoration, protection / guard rail, pile up, fire, music, animals, recycle, other; these categories fitted the answers from the participants. For all the tests they were performed, we applied the alpha ≤ 0.05, the result was significant when there was a $p \leq 0.05$.

Cultural background. To measure cultural background, we used a self-construal scale from Singelis (1994). The participants were asked to answer 24 questions: 12 interdependent self-construal questions and 12 independent self-construal questions. An example of the interdependent self-construal is; I have respect for the authority figures with whom I interact. An example of the independent items self-construal is; I'd rather say "No" directly, than risk being misunderstood. These questions were measured on a 7-point scale, ranging from 1 (never) to 7 (always) (see Appendix C for an overview of the self-construal scale from Singelis). In this self-construal scale people with an independent self-construal see themselves more often as an individual whereas people with an interdependent self-construal prefer being part of a group. Participants who were collectivistic minded scored a positive score and participants who were individualistic minded scored a negative score on the Singelis scale. This divided the participants in the collectivism culture or the individualistic culture, $\alpha = 0.534$.

Reaction towards compliments. To measure the reaction from the participants towards the compliments we used a scale from Holmes (1988). Holmes described three

ways in how to respond to compliments, namely accept, reject and deflect. Each of these

sub-categories has transparent labels (see Appendix C for an overview of the transparent

labels). To make sure that the reaction of the participants was coded in the right way, the

reaction of the participants was taped and coded by both of the researchers. We noticed

that the most of the participants, 53%, smiled when they received a compliment from the

researcher. This compliment reaction was completely different than the participants in the

accept condition. Despite of the fact that smiling when receiving a compliment belongs to

the accept condition, we decided to create another compliment accept condition, namely

smiling. Due to the size of groups, we merged the deflect- and reject condition. Those

two conditions did not accept receiving a compliment in comparison to the accept

condition. This means that we had 3 categories left, the accept-, non-accept- and the

smile condition. There were $N = 21$ participants in de acceptcondition, $N = 20$ in the non-

acceptcondition and $N = 47$ in the smile condition.

       In this research there was also focused on mood, motivation and self-esteem and it

is effect on performance. Earlier research from Baas (2010) has shown that these

variables can influence creativity performance. An example is that Baas (2010)

concluded that positive mood states which has an activating effect and have an approach

orientation, for example happiness, improve creativity.

       Mood. To measure the mood of the participants we used a 10–item Positive and

Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) from Thompson. This questionnaire was divided

into five positive affect items and five negative affect items. An example is; Thinking

about yourself and how you normally feel, to what extent do you generally feel upset?

This question was measured on a 5-point scale, ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always), $\alpha =$ 0.536 (see Appendix C for an overview of the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule).

Motivation. To measure the motivation from the participants we used the Situational Motivation Scale (SIMS) from Guay, Vallerand & Blanchard (2000). This questionnaire assessed the constructs of the total motivation which consists of intrinsic motivation, identified regulation, external regulation and amotivation. This questionnaire describes the reason why participants currently are engaged in this activity. An example is; Because I think that this activity is interesting. This item was measured on a 7-point scale, ranging from 1 (corresponds not all) to 7 (corresponds exactly), $\alpha = 0.725$ (see Appendix C for an overview of the Situational Motivation Scale).

Self-esteem. To measure the self-esteem of the participants we used the Self-Liking/Self-Competence Scale (SLCS) from Tafarodi & Swann (2001). This 16-item questionnaire measured self-competence and self-liking, which together influenced self-esteem. An example of the self-esteem questionnaire is; I tend to devalue myself. This item was measured on a 7-point scale, ranging from 1 (never) to 7 (always), $\alpha = 0.914$ (see Appendix C for an overview of the Self-Liking/Self Competence Scale).

Results

In this research we used a 2 (individualistic vs. collectivistic) x 2 (interpersonal compliment vs. performance compliment) design. We performed a twoway ANOVA with cultural background and type of compliment as predictors and performance as dependent variable.

To check whether the manipulation of the compliment was perceived as intended we performed a manipulation check. In this manipulation check we checked whether the

participants experienced that they received a compliment and which compliment they

received, an interpersonal- or performance compliment. If the participants indicated that

they did not receive a compliment, we had to exclude these participants from our dataset.

Unfortunately, we had to exclude 11 participants after the manipulation check has been

done. In addition we also checked if the participants appreciated the compliment, how it

made them feel and to what extent they thought the compliment was credible (see

Appendix B). The variables we tested in the manipulation check were appreciation

receiving compliment, happiness, gratefulness, appreciation, awkwardness, angriness and

credibility. We performed one way ANOVA's with compliment type as predictor and one

of the following variables as dependent variable; appreciate receiving compliment,

happiness, gratefulness, appreciation, awkwardness, angriness or credibility. See table 1

for an overview of the results.

Table 1.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Between variables questionnaires manipulation check and compliment type.

	df	*F*	*p*
Appreciate receiving compliment	1, 86	4.098	0.046
Happiness	1, 86	2.379	0.127
Gratefulness	1, 86	3.255	0.075
Appreciation	1, 86	0.082	0.775
Awkwardness	1, 86	0.428	0.515
Angriness	1, 86	1.199	0.277
Credibility	1, 86	1.965	0.165

Note. N = 88, p ≤ 0.05.

The results of the manipulation check show that there was a significant effect found for compliment type on appreciation receiving compliments. Participants indicated that they appreciated the personality compliment more ($M = 5.50$) than the performance compliment ($M = 5.02$).

Also there is a marginal significant effect found for compliment type on gratefulness. It looks like participants in this study were more grateful for receiving a personality compliment ($M = 4.98$) than receiving a performance compliment ($M = 4.86$). The other variables, happiness, appreciation, awkwardness, angriness and credibility were not significant.

Descriptive Statistics

In this research we investigated the effect of the type of compliments on subsequent performance. There were $N = 88$ participants in this research, of which $N = 6$ males and $N = 82$ females. From all the participants were $N = 35$ international participants and $N = 53$ were national participants. The interpersonal compliment condition consisted of $N = 46$ participants and the task performance compliment condition of $N = 42$ participants. There were $N = 49$ participants in the collectivistic condition and $N = 39$ in the individualistic condition.

In this research we investigated whether performance was effected by receiving compliments. We checked this by two creativity performance tasks, where performance was measured by the number of words and categories. Because the two tasks differ slightly, task 1 was to list as many objects as given adjective and task 2 was to generate as many uses as possible for the given noun, the results of task 1 and 2 are standardized.

Performance in this research is defined by Z-scores of Word Count and Z-scores of Word-Categories.

Cultural background

Hypothesis 1a: Participants with an individualistic cultural background are better in accepting a compliment in comparison with participants with a collectivistic cultural background.

To see whether cultural background influenced compliment acceptation, we performed an oneway ANOVA with cultural background as predictor and compliment reaction as dependent variable. Unfortunately there was no significant effect found for the effect of cultural background on compliment reaction, $F(1,86) = 0.018$, $p = 0.894$. Participants with a different cultural background did not differ in compliment reaction, and thus there was no difference in individualistic and collectivistic cultures and accepting a compliment. Hypothesis 1a cannot be confirmed.

Hypothesis 1b: Participants with an individualistic cultural background appreciate more receiving a compliment in comparison with participants with a collectivistic cultural background.

To see whether culture influenced compliment appreciation we performed an oneway ANOVA with cultural background as predictor and appreciation as dependent variable. Unfortunately cultural background does not have a significant influence on appreciation of receiving a compliment, $F(1,87) = 1,249$, $p = 0.267$. Participants with a collectivistic $M = 5.20$ or individualistic $M = 4.97$ cultural background do not significantly differ in appreciation of receiving a compliment, both conditions appreciated receiving a compliment, $Mtotal = 5.10$. Hypothesis 1b cannot be confirmed.

Type of compliments

Hypotheses 2: Participants who receive a performance compliment score higher on performance than participants who receive an interpersonal compliment.

To check whether type of compliment was influencing performance we performed an ANOVA with compliment type as the predictor and performance as dependent variable. We wondered if there was any difference in receiving either the interpersonal compliment or the performance compliment and it is effect the creativity task, thus performance. Unfortunately there was no significant effect found for Compliment Type and Performance Word Count, $F(1,86) = 0.088$, $p = 0.767$. There was no significant result as well for Compliment Type and Performance Categories $F(1,85) = 0.072$, $p = 0.790$. It shows that there is no difference in receiving an interpersonal or a performance compliment, in performing better in the creativity task. Both compliments did not improve creativity performance significantly. Hypothesis 2 cannot be confirmed.

Reaction to compliments

Hypothesis 3a: Participants who accept a compliment score higher on performance than participants who deflect or reject a compliment.

Hypothesis 3b: Participants who deflect a compliment score higher on performance than participants who score high at reject a compliment.

To check whether a different kind of reaction when receiving a compliment influenced performance we performed a regression analysis with compliment reaction as predictor and performance as dependent variable. Instead of having three compliment reaction conditions according to Holmes (1987), the accept-, reject-, deflect condition, we

developed the accept-, non-accept-, smile condition (see Reaction towards compliments, Measurements). Our results are based on the accept-, non-accept- and smile condition.

There was a significant effect found for Compliment Reaction on Performance Categories, $F(1,85) = 4.027$, $p = 0.048$, with an R^2 of 0.045. The results of the regression indicated that compliment reaction predicted performance categories ($\beta = 0.213$, $p < 0.05$). There was also a significant effect found for Compliment Reaction on Performance Word Count, $F(1,86) = 5.980$, $p = 0.017$, with an R^2 of 0.065. The results of the regression indicated that compliment reaction predicted performance word count ($\beta = 0.255$, $p < 0.05$).

In this investigation, it turns out that a different kind of reaction when receiving a compliment led to a slightly higher score on performance. Tukey Post Hoc tests revealed that the smile condition and the non-accept condition differ significantly from each other. Participants who were able to smile when they received the compliment scored higher on Performance Categories ($M = 0.131$, $SD = 0.985$) than participants who did not accept the compliment ($M = -0.048$, $SD = 0.920$). In the Performance Word Count Condition, participants who smiled when they received a compliment scored higher on performance ($M = 0.299$, $SD = 0.618$) than participants who did not accept the compliment ($M = -0.712$, $SD = 1.433$). Concluding, smiling when receiving a compliment has a positive influence on performance, this led to a higher score on performance. Participants who did not accept the compliment, scored worse on performance. Hypothesis 3a can be confirmed. Unfortunately hypothesis 3b cannot be proven, because the deflect condition and the reject condition are merged together in the dataset due to the number of participants. We cannot say anything about hypothesis 3b.

Mood, Motivation and Self-Esteem

To check whether mood was influencing performance, we performed a regression analysis with mood (positive and negative affect) as predictor and performance as dependent variable. There was a positive relationship between Positive Affect and Performance Word Count, but it was not significant, $\beta = 0.104$, $t(1,86)$, $p = 0.335$. There was a positive relationship between Positive Affect and Performance Categories, but it was not significant, $\beta = 0.078$, $t(1,85)$, $p = 0.474$. The relationship between Negative Affect and Performance Word Count was positive and not significant as well, $\beta = 0.038$, $t(1,86)$, $p = 0.722$. The relationship between Negative Affect and Performance Categories was also positive and not significant, $\beta = 0.045$, $t(1,85)$, $p = 0.681$. According to this study does mood, positive or negative, not contribute to a higher performance. There was no influence from specific mood on the performance task in this research.

To measure whether motivation was influencing performance, we performed a regression analysis with motivation as the predictor and performance as dependent variable. In this research there were four different motivation variables taken into account, Intrinsic Motivation, Identified Motivation, External Motivation, and Amotivation. See table 2 and table 3 for an overview of the results.

Table 2.

Regression Analysis type of Motivation predicting Performance Word Count

	B	*SE B*	β	*t*	*p*
Intrinsic Motivation	0.010	0.025	0.042	0.391	0.697
Identified Regulation	-0.035	0.026	-0.141	-1.322	0.190
External Regulation	0.012	0.018	0.075	0.698	0.487
Amotivation	0.027	0.028	0.105	0.978	0.331

Note. N = 88, $p \leq 0.05$.

Table 3.

Regression analysis type of Motivation predicting Performance Categories

	B	*SE B*	β	*t*	*p*
Intrinsic Motivation	0.013	0.025	0.057	0.529	0.598
Identified Regulation	-0.008	0.027	-0.033	-0.303	0.763
External Regulation	0.019	0.018	0.111	1.031	0.305
Amotivation	0.015	0.028	0.057	0.523	0.602

Note. N = 88, $p \leq 0.05$, $R^2 = 0.022$.

There was no difference in performance between intrinsic motivated participants, external motivated participants, identified motivated participants or amotivated participants at all and their score to performance. Participants who were motivated did not score a higher performance than participants who were less or not motivated to perform the two creativity tasks used in this study. Motivation did not play a role in performance in this investigation.

Finally, to check whether self-esteem was influencing performance, we performed a regression analysis with Self-Esteem (Self Liking and Self Competence) as the

predictor and performance as dependent variable. There was a slightly positive

relationship between Self-Competence and Performance Categories, but this was not

significant, $\beta = 0.022$, t(1,85), p = 0.840. The relationship between Self-Competence and

Performance Word Count was slightly positive as well, but it was not significant $\beta =$

0.046, t(1,86), p = 0.670.

The relationship between Self-Liking and Performance Word Count was positive, but not

significant $\beta = 0.063$, t(1,86), p = 0.561. The relationship between Self-Liking and

Performance Word Categories was positive, but also not significant, $\beta = 0.057$, t(1,85), p

= 0.603. It turned out that self-esteem, especially Self Liking and Self Competence, had

no effect on Performance. Participants with a high self-esteem did not differ in

performance than participants with a low self-esteem. We also checked whether self-

esteem affected compliment reaction. According to Kille, Eibach, Wood and Holmes

(2017), is it for people with a low self-esteem more difficult to accept a compliment and

thus to benefit from the received compliment. We performed an oneway ANOVA with

self-esteem (Self-Liking and Self-Competence) as predictor and compliment reaction as

dependent variable. Unfortunately in this research there was no significant effect found

for self-competence on compliment reaction, F (1,86) = 0.866, p = 0.355. The effect of

Self Liking on compliment reaction was not significant as well, F(1,86) = 0.000, p =

0.993. Although that Kille and colleagues (2017) have shown that self-esteem affected

compliment reaction, we cannot prove that in our results.

Despite of, there were no significant results found for these main-effects, there

were some other effects found. We performed an oneway ANOVA with mood as

predictor and Total Motivation as dependent variable. It turns out that mood shows a

significant result on it is effect of motivation, especially positive mood. A Positive Mood has a significant effect on the Total Motivation score of the participants $F(18, 87) = 2.303$, $p = 0.007$ and particularly on the Identified Regulation score $F(18,87) = 2.316$, $p = 0.007$. Negative affect has a marginal significant effect on Total Motivation $F(19,87) = 1.701$, $p = 0.058$. In this study it turns out that participants who experience a positive mood had more motivation to perform this task and were more identified motivated. It is particular that negative mood also a marginal significant effect showed on total motivation. On the other hand, it is a common thing that mood has a big influence on motivation.

Finally, we performed an oneway ANOVA with Gender as predictor and Performance as dependent variable. Despite the fact there were only 6 males in comparison with 82 females, it shows that in this research there is no significant effect found for gender on performance $F(1,87) = 0.065$, $p = 0.799$ for Word Count and $F(1,86) = 0.021$, $p = 0.886$ for Word Categories. It is a pity that there were only 6 males, but in this investigation gender had no influence on performance. Both males and females scored the same on performance.

Discussion

The goal of this research was to measure whether performance can be affected by positive feedback in the form of compliments. First, we were interested in the differences between cultures and the influence of culture on compliments. Another subtopic was the type of compliments: we distinguish between interpersonal compliments and performance-compliments. The next subtopic was whether people react differently towards compliments and whether its effect on performance differs across individuals.

Finally, we also measured motivation, mood and self-esteem, to check whether these variables could have influenced our results.

Cultural background

Our first goal was to check whether cultural background was influencing receiving compliments by compliment acceptance and compliment appreciation. This study did not demonstrate that cultural background influenced compliment acceptance and appreciation. Despite of the fact that research to different cultural backgrounds and positive feedback showed that students from the Western culture were motivated by success-feedback in comparison with students from the Eastern culture who were motivated by failure feedback (Shu & Lam, 2016), we did not see this influence in this study. This could be because of the difference in cultural background. The participants in the study from Shu & Lam (2016), were all Chinese or American participants. In this study we divided participants into individualistic culture or collectivistic culture according to the Self-construal scale (Singelis, 1994). Our collectivistic participants are not from one specific country, but could exist of different countries, which could have a different effect than the study of Shu & Lam (2016).

Compliment type

Subsequently the second goal was to check if compliment type has an influence on performance. This study did not demonstrate that participants who received an interpersonal compliment score better on performance than participants who received a performance compliment. This could be because of the lack of the number of men in this research. According to Albot (1998) do men prefer compliments with performance, ability or skill as a topic, in comparison with women who is compliments are focused on

appearance. Because there were only 6 males in this study, is the effect on compliment type and the difference between males and females not demonstrated. Another factor could be that the difference between the two compliments is not strong enough. For future research the difference between the interpersonal compliment and the performance compliment could be more emphasized. This means that the interpersonal topic could be more specific on the personal item and the performance compliments could be more performance related. For example for the performance compliment; 'That are a lot of creative ideas or you did come up with so many creative ideas', which emphasize an amount which could be linked to a better performance.

Reaction to compliments

The statistical findings of this study demonstrated that participants who were able to smile when receiving a compliment achieved a better performance than participants who did not accept the compliment. This study suggests that compliment reaction is an important factor in subsequent performance. Participants who were smiling when they received a compliment, and thus indirect the compliment accepted, scored higher on performance than participants who weren't able to accept the compliment. Still is unclear why the participants in the fully accept condition did not achieved a significant better performance, while the participants in the smile condition did. According to Holmes (1987) is smile a form of acceptance. Unfortunately in this study we had to merge some conditions together, for future research it would be interesting to make sure that there is an accept-, reject- and deflect- or evade condition to see what their influence is on performance. Holmes (1987) already found that culture is having an influence on compliment reaction in a study of Malaysian students the reject condition was much

higher (41%). Not only culture is an important factor for the next time, gender difference also influences on compliment reaction. Holmes (1987) concluded that it is more common that a man will ignore or evade a compliment, compared to a woman (19.3% vs. 11.2%).

Limitations and future research

In the following section, we discuss what we believe are the primary theoretical and practical limitations of the results.

First of all, the number of participants in our research relatively low. We recruited 133 participants, keeping in mind that we had to exclude some of them. We did not believe that we had to exclude these many participants, namely 45. Because there are 88 participants left, some statistical research was hard to perform. For the next time there need to be more participants in this study.

Next, this research has been executed within the setting of the university. As mentioned in the introduction, a valuable extension to this research would be a follow-up at an organization. This would require the fictional task used in this research to be replaced by a real-life organizational task, and the people paying the compliments to be actual people from within the organization. These influence of the results, resulting from the fact compliments from a stranger (i.e. the researchers) have a different effect, will be eliminated.

Another factor is motivation. In total 133 students were recruited for this experiment. From these 133 students, the vast majority were first year students. First year students are required to participate in a couple of investigations to accomplish their first

year. Their motivation to participate could be biased by the fact that their participation is required.

The tasks we used in this research is developed, valued and used before by Guilford (1967). The first task was to list as many objects as possible in five minutes that could be described by a given adjective. The second task was to generate as many uses as possible for a given noun. Unfortunately, a large difference was found between the two tasks: the number of solutions written down at the first task was significantly higher than the number of words generated during the second task. Furthermore, participants - particularly Dutch nationals – considered the noun in question ("car tire") to be very difficult and asked the researchers for an explanation. This may have led to an increased stress level, possibly discouraging creative thinking and leading to a relatively low number of solutions.

As mentioned before, the compliment section of this research could be an issue. By design, every participant needed to receive a compliment: either the performance compliment or the interpersonal one. The next time it could be very useful to use three or four conditions, instead of two next to the interpersonal and performance compliments, a control condition (in which the participant would not have received a compliment at all) and/or a negative feedback condition, could have revealed valuable baseline information.

Making sure that every compliment is received as we meant, is something we underestimated. It is hard to give a compliment in a natural manner repeatedly. Another difficulty is the need to prevent participants from overhearing conversations between researchers and other participants: finding out identical compliments are paid to other participants could lead to them losing fidelity in the compliments paid by the researchers.

Another point which needs to be considered is the fact that the male-female ratio was skewed: far more women than men participated in our research. This is unsurprising given the population at Leiden University, but could influence the results. There could be a difference in reaction towards compliments between men and women or there could be a difference between appreciation the compliment type. According to Holmes (1988) do men and women interpret compliments differently and use men and women compliments in a different way. An example is that women compliment other women frequently more often and that they strengthen the positive force of the given compliment than men do or men do to other men. Another thing is that men use compliments in a manner which attenuates on compliment significantly more often than women do (Holmes, 1988). In the next study to compliments should the male-female ratio be more equal and is it important that compliment reaction and the influence of gender be considered.

 The same holds for the Dutch-international ratio in this study. The fraction of Dutch students in the participant group was much higher than the fraction of international students. An equal distribution of participants from the Western and participants from Eastern culture could provide more interesting information about cultural background and positive feedback.

Finally, Belschak and Den Hartog (2009) concluded that most of the research were focused on the effects of feedback on task performance, and less on the influence of other elements of overall performance. They indicated that feedback influences emotions from the recipients and that these emotions mediate the relationship between feedback and performance. In this study we focused primarily on positive feedback and

performance, but this could be not enough to improve participants' performance. Next time, we could consider emphasizing the emotional effects when studying feedback.

Relevance of the current study

Effective leadership contains regular performance feedback to subordinates (Larson, 1989). Building the qualities and getting the best out of people to help them flourish is one of the perspectives of positive psychology. Proving people with positive feedback and let them flourish because of their talents, will make people happier and better. If people work from their talents and work in their flow, they will flourish and get the best of their selves. In this research we were investigating if performance from people can rise by receiving a compliment. Our findings show that performance does increase when participants are smiling when they receive a compliment and thus indirect accept the compliment. Ofcourse this is just a beginning, and to make sure how this works and how to implement these positive feedback, compliments, in organizations future research needs to be done.

References

Amabile, T. M. (1983). The social psychology of creativity: A componential conceptualization. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 45*, 357-376.

Baas, M. (2010). *The Psychology of Creativity: Moods, Minds, and Motives*. Kurt Lewin Institute.

Bonk, C. (2003). Creativity tests: Guilford's alternative uses task (1967). *Bloomington, IN: Department of Educational Psychology,* School of Education, Indiana University.

Belschak, F. D., & Den Hartog, D. N. (2009). Consequences of Positive and Negative Feedback: The Impact on Emotions and Extra-Role Behaviors. *Applied Psychology, 58(2),* 274-303.

Cuddy, A., Wolf, E., Crotty, S., Glick, P., Chong, J., & Norton, M. (2015). Men as Cultural Ideals: Cultural Values Moderate Gender Stereotype Content. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, Vol. 109, 4*, 622-635.

De Dreu, C. K. W., & Nijstad, B. A. (2008). Mental set and creative thought in social conflict: threatrigidity versus motivated focus. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 95*, 648-661.

DeNisi, A. S., & Kluger, A. N. (2000). Feedback effectiveness: Can 360-degree appraisals be improved? *Academy of Management Executive, 14*, 129–139.

Ely, R. J., & Thomas, D. A. (2001). Cultural Diversity at Work; The effects of diversity perspectives on work group processes and outcomes. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 46*, 229-273.

Geddes, D. & Konrad, A. M. (2003). Demographic differences and reactions to performance feedback. *Human Relations, 56(12),* 1485-1513.

Georgas, J. (1989). Changing family values in Greece: From collectivist to individualist. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 20,* 80-91.

Gordon, R. A. (1996). Impact of ingratiation on judgments and evaluations: A meta-analytic investigation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 71(1),* 54-70.

Grant, N. K., & Fabrigar, L. R., & Lim, H. (2010). Exploring the Efficacy of Compliments as a Tactic for Securing Compliance. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology, 32*, 226-233.

Guay, F., Vallerand, R. J., & Blanchard, C. (2000). On the Assessment of Situational Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation: The Situational Motivation Scale (SIMS). *Motivation and Emotion, 24(3)*, 175-213.

Hamamura, T., Meijer, Z., Heine, S. J., Kamaya, K., & Hori, I. (2009). Approach–avoidance motivation and information processing: A cross-cultural analysis. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 35,* 454–462.

Harackiewicz, J. M. (1979). The effects of reward contingency and performance feedback on intrinsic motivation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 37(8),* 1352.

Herbert, R. 1986. Say Thank You or Something. *American Speech 61 (1),* 76-88.

Holmes, J. (1988). Paying compliments: A sex-preferential politeness strategy. *Journal of Pragmatics, 12(4)*, 445-465.

Holmes, J., & Brown, D. F. (1987). Teachers and Students Learning About Compliments. *TESOL Quarterly, 21(3),* 523-546.

Ilies, R., & Judge, T. A. (2005). Goal regulation across time: The effects of feedback and affect. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 90*, 453–467.

Ilgen, D.R., & Davis, C.A. (2000). Bearing bad news: Reactions to negative performance feedback. *Applied Psychology: An International Review, 49*, 550–565.

Jacob, C., & Guéguen, N. (2014). The effect of compliments on customers' compliance with a food server's suggestion. *International Journal of Hospitality Management, 40*, 59-61.

Kille, D. R., Eibach, R. P., Wood, J. V., & Holmes, J. G. (2017). Who can't take a compliment? The role of construal level and self-esteem in accepting positive feedback from close others. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology 68*, 40-49.

Kim, K. & Choi, S. B. (2017). Influences of Creative Personality and Working Environment on the Research Productivity of Business School Faculty. *Creativity Research Journal, 29,* 10-20.

Kluger, A. N., & DeNisi, A. (1996). The effects of feedback interventions on performance: a historical review, a meta-analysis, and a preliminary feedback intervention theory. *Psychological Bulletin, 119(2),* 254.

Lam, C. F., Derue, D. S., Karam, E. P., & Hollenbeck, J. R. (2011). The impact of feedback frequency on learning and task performance: Challenging the "more is better" assumption. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 116*, 217-228.

Lin, C. Y., Woodfield, H., & Ren, W. (2012). Compliments in Taiwan and Mainland Chinese: The influence of region and compliment topic. *Journal of Pragmatics, 44*, 1486- 1502.

Markus, H., & Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion and involvement. *Psychological Review, 98*, 224–253.

Matsui, T., Okada, A., & Inoshita, O. (1983). Mechanism of feedback affecting task performance. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, 31*, 114-122.

Matsuura, H. 2004. Compliment-giving Behavior in American English and Japanese. *JALT Journal 26(2*), 147-170.

Paulus, P. B., & Nijstad, B. A. (2003). *Group creativity: Innovation trough collaboration*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Podsakoff, P. M., & Farh, J. (1989). Effects of feedback sign and credibility on goal setting and task performance. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 44,* 45-67.

Rees-Miller, J. (2011). Compliments revisited: Contemporary compliments and gender. *Journal of Pragmatics, 43*, 2673-2688.

Runco, M. A. (2004). Creativity. *Annual Review of Psychology, 55*, 657-687.

Seiter, J. S., & Dutson, E. (2007). The Effect of Compliments on Tipping Behavior in Hairstyling Salons1. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 37(9),* 1999-2007.

Seligman, M. E. P., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2000). Positive Pscyhology, an introduction. *American Psychologist, 55*, 5-14.

Singelis, T. M. (1994). The Measurement of Independent and Interdependent Self-Construals. *Society for Personality and Social Psychology, 20(5)*, 580-591.

Sternberg, R. J., & Lubart, T. I. (1999). The concept of creativity: prospects and paradigms. In R. J. Sternberg (Ed.), *Handbook of creativity* (pp. 3-15). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Tafarodi, R. W., & Swann Jr, W. B. (2001). Two-dimensional self-esteem: theory and measurement. *Personality and Individual differences, 31*, 653-673.

Thompson, E. R. (2007). Development and validation of an internationally reliable short-form of the positive and negative affect schedule (PANAS). *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 38*, 227-242.

Thurlings, M., Vermeulen, M., Bastiaens, T., & Stijnen, S. (2013). Understanding feedback: A learning theory prospective. *Educational Research Review 9,* 1-15.

Triandis, H. (1990a). Cross-cultural studies of individualism and collectivism. *Nebraska Symposium on Motivation* (pp. 323-337).

Voerman, L., Korthagen, F. A. J., Meijer, P. C., & Simons, R. J. (2013). Feedback revisited: adding perspectives based on positive psychology. Implications for theory and classroom practice. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 43*, 91-98.

Yu, M. C. 2003. On the Universality of Face: Evidence from Chinese Compliment Response Behavior. *Journal of Pragmatics 35(10)*, 1679-1710.

Woonik, C. & Sangdo, L. (2011). Exploring differences in complimen responses in English between American undergraduates and Korean undergraduates. *새한영어영문학*, 309-327.

Woodman, R. W., Sawyer, J. E., & Griffin, R. W. (1993). Toward a theory of organizational creativity. *Academic of Management Review, 18*, 293-321.

Zhou, J., & George, J. M. (2001). When job dissatisfaction leads to creativity: Encouraging the expression of voice. *Academy of Management Journal, 44,* 682–696.

Appendix A
Informed Consent Form

Title of the study: Personality and creativity

This experiment is about personality and creativity. You'll be taking part in two tasks which will take approximately 30 minutes in total. You will either receive credits or money for participating in our experiment.

By signing this consent form, I declare to:

- have read the information letter for the participant. I could ask additional questions. My questions have been answered adequately. I have had sufficient time to decide whether or not I participate.
- be aware that participation is completely voluntary. I know that I can decide at any moment not to participate or to stop. I do not need to provide a reason for that.
- be aware that my responses are processed anonymously or in a coded way.
- be aware that I will be recorded throughout this experiment, but that all of this information will be used for the study only.
- give consent to use my data for the purposes that are mentioned in the information letter.

I hereby consent to participating in this study.
Name of participant: _____
Signature: _____
Date: _____/_____/_____

Appendix B
Manipulation Check

In this experiment you were asked to perform two creativity tasks. The first task was to

list as many objects as possible related to the adjective at the top of the page. For the

second task you were asked to generate as many uses as possible for a particular object.

1. What do you think this experiment was all about?

2. Did you receive a compliment from the experiment leader? Yes/No

3. Do you remember what the compliment was about? Choose one of the
   compliments you received from the experiment leader.

   Interpersonal compliments:

   - Well done! You're a such a creative person!

   - Other….........

   Performance compliments:

   - Well done! You did such a creative job!

   - Other……….

4. To what extent did you appreciate the compliment the experiment leader gave
   you? This question was measured on a seven point scale, ranging from 1 (do not
   appreciate at all) to 7 (highly appreciate).

5. To what extent did the compliment make you feel happy? This question was
   measured on a seven point scale, ranging from 1 (not happy at all) to 7 (very
   happy).

6. To what extent did the compliment make you feel grateful? This question was measured on a seven point scale, ranging from 1 (not grateful at all) to 7 (very grateful).

7. To what extent did the compliment make you feel appreciated? This question was measured on a seven point scale, ranging from 1 (not appreciated at all) to 7 (highly appreciated).

8. To what extent did the compliment make you feel awkward? This question was measured on a seven point scale, ranging from 1 (not awkward at all) to 7 (very awkward).

9. To what extent did the compliment make you angry? This question was measured on a seven point scale, ranging from 1 (not angry at all) to 7 (very angry).

10. Did you think the compliment was credible? This question was measured on a seven point scale, ranging from 1 (not credible at all) to 7 (very credible).

Thank you for joining our experiment!

Appendix C

Measurements

Cultural background (Singelis, 1994).

Interdependent items

1. I have respect for the authority figures with whom I interact.
2. It is important for me to maintain harmony within my group.
3. My happiness depends on the happiness of those around me.
4. I would offer my seat in a bus to my professor.
5. I respect people who are modest about themselves.
6. I will sacrifice my self-interest fort the benefit of the group I am in.
7. I often have the feeling that my relationship with others are more important than my own accomplishments
8. I should take into consideration my parents' advice when making education / career plans.
9. It is important to me to respect decisions made by the group.
10. I will stay in a group if they need me, even when I'm not happy with the group.
11. If my brother or sister fails, I feel responsible.
12. Even when I strongly disagree with group members, I avoid an argument.

Independent items

13. I'd rather say "No" directly, than risk being misunderstood.
14. Speaking up during a class is not a problem for me.
15. Having a lively imagination is important to me.
16. I am comfortable with being singles out for praise or rewards
17. I am the same person at home than I am at school
18. Being able to take care of myself is a primary concern for me.
19. I act the same way no matter who I am with.
20. I feel comfortable using someone's first name soon after I meet them, even when they are much older than I am.
21. I prefer to be direct and forthright when dealing with people I've just met.
22. I enjoy being unique and different from others in many respects.
23. My personal identity independent of others, is very important to me.
24. I value being in good health above everything.

Reaction towards compliments (Holmes, 1988).

Accept

1. Appreciation /agreement token
   e.g. *Thanks, yes.*
2. Agreeing utterance
   e.g. *I think it is lovely too.*
3. Downgrading / qualifying utterance
   e.g. It is not too bad is it.
4. Return compliment
   e.g. You're looking good too.

Reject
1. Disagreeing utterance
   e.g. I am afraid I do not like it much.
2. Question accuracy
   e.g. Is beautiful the right word?
3. Challenge sincerity
   e.g. You do not really mean that.

Deflect/Evade
1. Shift credit
   e.g. my mother knitted it.
2. Informative comment
   e.g. I bought it at that Vibrant Knits place.
3. Ignore
   e.g. It is time we were leaving isn't it?
4. Legitimate evasion
5. Request reassurance / repetition
   e.g. Do you really think so?

Mood (Thompson, 2007).

The International Positive and Negative Affect Schedule Short Form (I-PANAS-SF)
Question, Measure, and Item Order
Thinking about yourself and how you normally feel, to what extent do you generally feel:

Upset	never 1	2	3	4	5 always
Hostile	never 1	2	3	4	5 always
Alert	never 1	2	3	4	5 always
Ashamed	never 1	2	3	4	5 always
Inspired	never 1	2	3	4	5 always
Nervous	never 1	2	3	4	5 always
Determined	never 1	2	3	4	5 always
Attentive	never 1	2	3	4	5 always
Afraid	never 1	2	3	4	5 always
Active	never 1	2	3	4	5 always

Motivation (Guay, Vallerand and Blanchard, 2000).

The Situational Motivation Scale (SIMS)
Directions: Read each item carefully. Using the scale below, please circle the number that best describes the reason why you are currently engaged in this activity. Answer each item according to the following scale: 1: *corresponds not all*; 2*: corresponds a very little*; 3: *corresponds a little*; 4: *corresponds moderately*; 5: *corresponds enough*; 6: *corresponds a lot*; 7: *corresponds exactly*.

Why are you currently engaged in this activity?

46

1. Because I think that this activity is interesting.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. Because I am doing it for my own good.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Because I am supposed to do it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. There may be good reasons to do this activity, but personally I don't see any.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Because I think that this activity is pleasant.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. Because I think that this activity is good for me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. Because it is something that I have to do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. I do this activity but I am not sure if it is worth it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. Because this activity is fun.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. By personal decision.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. Because I don't have any choice.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. I don't know; I don't see what this activity brings me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. Because I feel good when doing this activity.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. Because I believe that this activity is important for me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. Because I feel that I have to do it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. I do this activity, but I am not sure it is a good thing to pursue it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Codification key:
Intrinsic motivation: Items 1, 5, 9, 13;
Identified regulation: Items 2, 6, 10, 14;
External regulation: Items 3,7, 11, 15;
Amotivation: Items 4, 8, 12, 16.

Self-esteem (Tafarodi & Swann, 2001).

Self-Liking/Self-Competence Scale-Revised Version (SLCS-R) items

1. I tend to devalue myself. (L-)
2. I am highly effective at things I do. (C+)
3. I am very comfortable with myself. (L+)
4. I am almost always able to accomplish what I try for. (C+)
5. I am secure in my sense of worth. (L+)
6. It is sometimes unpleasant for me to think about myself. (L-)
7. I have a negative attitude toward myself. (L-)
8. At times, I find it difficult to achieve the things that are important to me. (C-)
9. I feel great about who I am. (L+)
10. I sometimes deal poorly with challenges. (C-)
11. I never doubt my personal worth. (L+)
12. I perform very well at many things. (C+)
13. I sometimes fail to fulfill my goals. (C-)
14. I am very talented. (C+)
15. I do not have enough respect for myself. (L-)
16. I wish I were more skillful in my activities. (C-)

Note. C, self-competence; L, self-liking; -, negative item; +, positive item.

Appendix D
Demographic data

Cross what does **<u>not</u>** apply to you:

Gender: Male / Female

Age: …………………………………………………

Place of birth: …………………………………………………

Place of birth parents: …………………………………………………

Study: …………………………………………………

Reward: Credits / Money