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"Deception: Moral Transgression or Social Necessity?": Cultural-Relativity of Deception Motivations and Perceptions of Deceptive Communication

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In this study, we investigate the impact of cultural identity on: (a) motivations for engaging in deceptive communication, (b) the perceived "deceptiveness" of a range of deceptive responses, and (c) the willingness to use various deception strategies. Participants from three different locations (Hong Kong, Hawai'i, and mainland United States) were provided with a questionnaire designed to assess cultural identity, motivations for deception, perceptions of the deceptiveness of a range of various deceptive messages, and the willingness to use various available deception strategies. Results indicated that higher degrees of interdependence were related to a greater overall motivation to deceive for both self- and other-benefit. Furthermore, results suggest that whereas those characterized by higher degrees of independence will tend to perceive any message that departs from the truth as highly deceptive in nature, those characterized by higher degrees of interdependence will be more likely to perceive messages that depart from truth as "not deceptive." Finally, the willingness to use the various deception strategies was found to be moderated by effects of the self-benefit versus other-benefit situations. Current findings provide preliminary evidence that culture is indeed a relevant factor that can no longer be ignored in future theorizing and investigation of deceptive communication phenomena.

Keywords: Deception; Culture; Self-Construal; Deception Strategies

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> You shall destroy those who speak falsehood (Psalm 5:6 NKJV)
>
> A lie is often necessary. (Japanese Proverb)

Extensive strides have been made in identifying the variables that influence both the production and interpretation of deceptive messages (see DePaulo & Kirkendol, 1989; DePaulo, Lanier, & Davis, 1983; Zuckerman, DePaulo, & Rosenthal, 1981; Zuckerman & Driver, 1985). However, there have been relatively few attempts to identify the ways in which deceptive communication practices can vary systematically across cultures. A majority of the research that has been conducted to date has been strictly monocultural in approach, and deception appears to be regarded as a phenomenon that occurs in a "cultural vacuum." To the contrary, however, while deception can be regarded fairly as a universally occurring phenomenon, a review of existing cross-cultural studies involving deception (e.g., Al-Simadi, 2000; Aune & Waters, 1994; Bond & Atoum, 2000; Seiter, Bruschke, & Bai, 2002; Yeung, Levine, & Nishiyama, 1999) suggests that the ways in which individuals perceive and regard deceptive communication are impacted by cross-cultural norms and practices. Specifically, the norms and practices espoused by a given culture may more or less sanction the use of deceptive communication as a necessary part of daily interaction.

To the extent that cultures endorse the concept of deception as "moral transgression," individuals should demonstrate a negative view, in general, towards engaging in deceptive communication. By contrast, to the degree which cultures endorse the concept of deception as a "social necessity," individuals should demonstrate a more pragmatic view, in general, towards producing and receiving deceptive messages. The current study investigates the impact of culture on: (a) one's motivations for engaging in deceptive communication, (b) one's perceptions of the degree of "deceptiveness" of a range of deceptive messages, and (c) one's willingness to use certain deceptive messages in various situations.

Motivations for Deception

Various typologies have been proffered to identify the reasons a communicator might choose to deceive a target (e.g., Camden, Motley, & Wilson, 1984; Lindskold & Walters, 1983; Metts & Chronis, 1986; Turner, Edgley, & Olmstead, 1975). Based on the categories put forth by numerous typologies, it seems that deception motives fall under two general categories: deception to protect one's own needs and/or face and deception to protect others' need and/or face. Thus, we focus on two overarching categories of deceptive motivation: (a) self-oriented motives and (b) other-oriented motives. Self-oriented motives focus primarily on the attainment of self-identity, relationship, and task interaction goals insofar as there is something to be gained or protected on the part of the deceiver, while other-oriented motives refer specifically to the motivation to protect a target's image, to avoid hurting a partner, or to avoid unwanted relational trauma.

Notably, a critical aspect that is shared by prior studies of deceptive motivation is that the samples employed by each are from cultural populations characterized by

relatively high degrees of individualism and independence (see, e.g., Camden et al., 1984; Hample, 1980; Turner et al., 1975). For this reason, the generalizability of findings to cultures that are less individualistic and more collectively oriented remains questionable. In the next section, we examine some unique cross-cultural variations that are likely to exert an effect on overall motivations to deceive.

Cultural Influences on the Motivations to Deceive

One of the most widely used dimensions for differentiating culture the concept of individualism–collectivism (Hofstede, 2001; Triandis, 2001). Individualism has been conceptualized as the differentiation of the individual from groups, networks, and other collective organizations, while collectivism focuses on the goals, needs, and social norms of the group which take precedence over the individual. While these dimensions are useful for studying broad variations between cultures, they do not allow for a thorough inventory of the variations between individuals that can occur within cultures.

We examine within-culture differences via the individual-level, psychological dimensions of independence and interdependence. Markus and Kitayama (1991, 1994) argued that these two dimensions of self-identity exert a powerful impact on cognition, emotion, and motivation, and that the strength of one's tendencies is enabled and developed, according to one's cultural background. The main difference between the two self-construals is the belief one holds regarding how the self is related to others. Those with highly developed independent-selves see the self as separate from others, while those with highly developed interdependent-selves see the self as connected with others. The normative imperative of the independent self-construal is to be self-sufficient and to express one's unique strengths. In contrast, the normative imperative of the interdependent self-construal is to maintain connectedness and harmony with significant others. To be mature in this view would be to internally control or suppress abilities, opinions, emotions, or goals in deference to normative behaviors which are specific to the current social context and which promote interdependence.

Relatedly, cultural regard for the concept of morality is likely to be affected by differential emphasis on the self versus the group as the major focal point guiding interaction. For cultures that highlight the individual as the sole determinant of his or her own behavior, morality is likely to be seen in terms of a clear-cut dualism between good or bad, or what is right or wrong (Lebra, 1976). This places the individual in a position of being in sole responsibility of one's own conduct and holds the individual accountable for his or her own behaviors. By comparison, cultural orientations in which the group takes precedence over the individual tend to regard morality strictly as a social phenomenon that takes into account the needs and expectations of group members. Regarded as such, morality in the collective sense entails carefully appraising the situation and responding in ways that protect the face-needs of others (Lebra, 1976).

On the whole, differential emphases on the self versus the group as the focal point of behavior account for why independently oriented individuals are more inclined to view deceptive communication in terms of moral issues involving right and wrong, and/or good and evil, which, subsequently, causes the individual to regard deceptive communication as a strategy to be minimized and/or avoided. By contrast, due to societal sanctioning of deceptive communication among cultures endorsing higher levels of interdependence, and the accompanying differential regard for the concept of morality, the use of deceptive communication in collective cultures performs an operative function which is conducive to maintaining the social order. These ideas are expressed in the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1a: Higher degrees of independence will be associated with a lower motivation to use deception in general.

Hypothesis 1b: Higher degrees of interdependence will be associated with a higher motivation to use deception in general.

However, type of motivation should moderate the relationship between independence and interdependence such that the strength of the independent self-construal should be positively correlated with self-oriented motivations while the strength of the interdependent self should be related to other-oriented motivations. Aune and Waters (1994) found partial support for these predictions. Although within-culture variations were not measured, they found that people in Samoa (presumably having stronger interdependent selves) were more motivated to deceive out of concern for others (their own family or group or to please an authority figure). They also found that North Americans (presumably having stronger independent selves) were motivated to deceive when they felt an issue was private or when it was necessary to protect the target person's feelings. However, because their study used subject nationality as the primary variable for distinguishing culture, the differences that can exist among individuals within a culture remain unclear.

A review of self-construal literature (e.g., Kim, 1993, 1999; Kim, Kim, Kam, & Shin, 2003; Kim, Shin, & Cai, 1998; Kim et al., 1996; Kitayama, Markus, Matsumoto, & Norasakkunkit, 1997; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Singelis & Brown, 1995) suggests that because the independent source of esteem is embedded in establishing and protecting the "authenticity" of the self, higher degrees of independence will be associated with self-oriented motivations for deception. By contrast, it is expected that higher degrees of interdependence will be related to the other-oriented motivation for the use of deception because the key focus is on maintaining relational harmony and on the needs and desires of others. Additionally, prior research conducted in predominantly individualistic cultures on motivations for deception has indicated that people of this cultural-orientation are more inclined to deceive for self-benefit than for the benefit of the other (e.g., Camden et al., 1984; Hample, 1980; Turner et al., 1975). Hample's (1980) research (conducted in the U.S.) on the purposes of lying reported that lying is generally a selfish activity that is designed to benefit the liar. In his questionnaire study, he found that nearly two

thirds of the lies were admittedly intended to benefit the liar, and that only approximately one quarter of the deceptions were for the benefit of the other person or an interpersonal relationship. Further research by Camden et al. (1984) also validated the same general claim. In their study, 75.8% of lies were told for the benefit of the liar, while only 21.7% of lies were told for the benefit of the other, and 2.5% for the benefit of a third party.

Hence, there is sufficient evidence to believe that degree of independence will be positively correlated with a willingness to engage in deceptive communication if the core motivation is to benefit the self. Similarly, degree of interdependence will be positively correlated with a willingness to engage in deception if the basis of the motivation is to protect the other or the group.

Hypothesis 2a: Higher degrees of independence will be more positively associated with self-oriented deception motivation than for other-oriented deception motivation.

Hypothesis 2b: Higher degrees of interdependence will be more positively associated with other-oriented deception motivation than for self-oriented deception motivation.

Deceptive Strategies

Not only are there multiple motives for deception, but communicators have several alternatives when it comes to formulating their deceptive messages. One area of study in deception research has been to clarify what types of deceptive acts are used when deceiving. In general, the word "deception" is strongly associated with lying (Hopper & Bell, 1984); however, researchers have documented various types of deceptive strategies when it comes to altering message information (Buller & Burgoon, 1996; Galasinski, 1994; McCornack, 1992; Metts, 1989; Turner et al., 1975). Galasinski (1994) believed that deception could occur mainly by omission and commission. He described deception by omission as a type of passive deception in the sense that a speaker does nothing to prevent a listener from acquiring or maintaining a certain belief. Deception by commission, on the other hand, is what Galasinski referred to as a type of active deceit; the speaker actually does something for the addressee to acquire a belief that the speaker intends to induce. In this study, since our focus is on verbal responses, we have decided to choose only "active" forms of deceit (commission).

A typology put forth by Holtgraves (1986) seems to neatly consolidate and encompass prior typologies and various multidimensional approaches. Contained in his study are four basic reply types: (a) direct and true, (b) direct and false, (c) indirect and evasive, and (d) indirect and irrelevant. Based on Holtgraves' typology, we adopt a modified deceptive communication typology consisting of the following response strategies: (a) Lie (Direct and False), (b) Half-Truth (Indirect and False), (3) Evasive response (Indirect and Evasive), and (d) Irrelevant assertion (Indirect and Irrelevant) (Table 1). The former strategy refers to direct styles of message response,

Table 1 Typologies of Deceptive Message Responses. Examples for the typologies are illustrated by means of the situational context, "You were out late dancing, and as a result, you were not prepared and made several mistakes on a major group presentation. After class, one of your group members inquires about what happened." Examples for the other-benefit situation are illustrated by means of the situational context, "You noticed that your co-worker is wearing a shirt/blouse that you find truly distasteful. He/she approaches you and asks you what you think of his/her new shirt/blouse."

Deceptive Replies	Definition	Self-Benefit Situation	Other-Benefit Situation
Direct and False (Outright Lie)	This reply provides information that is false.	"I didn't practice enough because I was really sick."	"I think it looks very good on you."
Indirect and False (Half-Truth)	This reply provides information that is false but indirect.	"I didn't practice enough because I had to be out somewhere yesterday."	"It looks o.k."
Evasive	This reply addresses the topic of the preceding utterance, but does not provide the requested information. Evasive assertions are overinclusive statements that broach the topic of the first speaker's utterance in a very broad manner.	"The other groups seemed to be doing o.k."	"It seems like clothes are getting terribly expensive."
Irrelevant Assertion	This reply serves to completely change the topic introduced by the first speaker.	"I'm going to take Taichi class next semester."	"I'm going on a vacation next month."

whereas the latter three pertain to indirect forms of deceptive response strategies. The "direct" and "indirect" strategy categorization scheme employed in this study is suitable for encompassing a broad range of deceptive strategy types.

Cultural Relativity of the Perceived Deceptiveness of Various Deception Strategies

Given that the cultural context exerts a substantive impact on cognition (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), it is logical that individuals within a culture will develop a view towards deceptive communication that is consonant with the primary values endorsed by the particular culture. Specifically, a culture that upholds the values of individuality, honesty, and openness, is likely to regard any message that departs from the truth as being "deceptive." Cultures which endorse more independent value orientations, in particular, are likely to perpetuate the general view that any form of information management and/or manipulation is contrary to the values of honesty and openness, and therefore, should be regarded as both negative and deceptive. On the other hand, a culture that emphasizes the values of group homogeneity, face-saving, and politeness, would be much less likely to perceive discrepancies between thought and the spoken

word as "deceitful." Rather, members of this particular culture would be more likely to view such discrepancies as a positive mechanism by which people can maintain healthy relationships.

Preliminary support was found for this notion in a study by Lapinski (1995) concerning information manipulation theory. Specifically, she found that the higher individuals' level of interdependence, the more generally honest they viewed fundamentally "deceptive" messages. As previously mentioned, this may be due to the interdependent inclination to use deception as a practical communication device for achieving certain relationship maintenance goals. Deceptive messages which carry the potential to maintain face and promote harmonious relationships are *expected* by those who maintain more interdependent value orientations. Hence, these messages may not be considered "deceptive" per se, but rather, deceptive messages may be better regarded as expected, standard, and polite. Given the aforementioned, we posit the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 3a: Higher degrees of independence will be positively associated with judgments of the four deception strategies as highly deceptive.

Hypothesis 3b: Higher degrees of interdependence will be negatively associated with judgments of the four deception strategies as highly deceptive.

Cultural Relativity of the Willingness to Use the Various Deception Strategies

Building on prior arguments regarding the relationships between cultural identity, deception motivation, and the perceived deceptiveness of various forms of deception, we also explored the relationship between self-construal and one's choice of direct or indirect deception strategies. As we have argued previously, those with highly developed interdependent selves are connected with their social context (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). They are more sensitive to others and emphasize interpersonal relations. Because individuals with dominant interdependent self-construals are concerned with others' feelings and evaluations, they control and restrict the expression of their true inner feelings if the expression of those feelings could be detrimental to the social relationship. Thus, individuals with highly developed interdependent self-construals will tend to *avoid* expressing negative emotions, voicing their true (negative or damaging) opinions, or expressing disagreements directly and overtly in communication situations. Direct deceit is the most effective way to avoid these expressions which are potentially damaging to others or relational harmony. By being direct in their deception, even the suspicion of misrepresentation that might accompany a more indirect strategy is averted and the other's face is most strongly supported.

On the other hand, members of individualistic cultures are concerned with self-face maintenance for the purpose of asserting and defending the "I" identity (Ting-Toomey, 1988). Consistent with previous arguments, avoiding unequivocal lies may be less anxiety producing for the independent self which is concerned with the consistency of beliefs and their expression. As we hypothesized in the previous

section, the strength of the interdependent self-construal is predicted to be positively related with deception motivation while the independent self is predicted to be negatively related with deception motivation. Therefore, we expect that the use of deception strategies is similarly related:

Hypothesis 4a: Higher degrees of independence will be negatively associated with the likelihood of use of the various deception strategies.

Hypothesis 4b: Higher degrees of interdependence will be positively associated with the likelihood of use of the various deception strategies.

Effects of the Situation: Deception Enacted for Self- versus Other-Benefit

It is reasonable to expect that contextual factors will affect the use of deceptive strategies, especially when those factors impact the motivation to deceive. Specifically, self-benefit versus other-benefit situations may likely impact one's choice of deceptive strategies (see Boster & Stiff, 1984). The interdependent self, for example, may be more inclined to use various deception strategies when the situation calls for saving the "face" of the other (i.e., other-benefit situation); however, in a situation where deception may benefit the self (i.e., self-benefit situation), the independent self may resort to the use of various deception strategies because accentuating the self bears much more importance than saving the "face" of others and preserving harmony among group members. Similarly, independents may be more likely to use indirect deception strategies in a situation in which deception may benefit others. Yet, in a situation where the benefit serves to highlight the internal attributes of the self, they may more likely use direct deception strategies to save their own "face" or to make themselves appear better. Therefore, it is predicted that the type of situation (i.e., self-benefit vs. other-benefit) will influence the deception strategies that interdependents and independents will prefer to employ to suit their individual or group needs.

Hypothesis 5a: Higher levels of independence will be positively associated with a greater likelihood of use of the various deception strategies (i.e., Lie, Half-Truth, Evasive assertion, Irrelevant assertion) in *self-benefit* situations, rather than other-benefit situations.

Hypothesis 5b: Higher levels of interdependence will be positively associated with a greater likelihood of use of the various deception strategies (i.e., Lie, Half-Truth, Evasive assertion, Irrelevant assertion) in *other-benefit* situations, rather than self-benefit situations.

Method

Participants

A total of 664 undergraduates studying in Hong Kong ($N = 226$), Hawai'i ($N = 209$), and the mainland United States ($N = 229$) participated in the study. The participants

from Hong Kong were undergraduates at Hong Kong Baptist University. The Hawai'i participants were undergraduates at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. The mainland United States sample was drawn from undergraduates at California State University, Chico. The mean age of respondents from Hong Kong was 19.49. The mean age of the respondents from Hawai'i was 22.12. The mean age of respondents from the mainland U.S. was 22.21. Females comprised 75.7% of the Hong Kong sample, 61.9% of the Hawai'i sample, and 63.6% of the mainland U.S. sample.[1] Participants from Hong Kong, Hawai'i, and the mainland United States were selected for comparison because of considerable cultural differences between them. The three groups seem to possess somewhat different cultural orientations in terms of the individualism-collectivism dimensions. The mainland U.S. culture has been described typically as highly individualistic and the culture of Hong Kong has been described typically as highly collectivistic. Hawai'i, on the other hand, has been noted for its unique pluralistic cultural environment. Hawai'i is heavily influenced by Asian and Polynesian cultures while maintaining a predominantly Western cultural backdrop. A unique "local" culture has emerged which, we presume, cultivates both East-Asian and Western cultures.

Measurement

Interdependent and independent self-construals. For the purposes of this research, we adopted Leung and Kim's (1997) Revised Self-Construal Scale to determine participants' cultural identities (i.e., independent or interdependent). This scale consolidates the most salient elements from prior self-construal scales and incorporates items reflecting concepts related to self-construals which have not been included in previous scales. This measurement instrument uses most items from Singelis' (1994) Self-Construal Scale and Gudykunst et al.'s (1996) Independent and Interdependent Self-Construal Scales (IISC Scales). Items were also written to incorporate concepts theoretically included in Markus and Kitayama's (1991) constructs of the independent and interdependent self-construals that were not included in previous scales. Responses to the items were measured on 7-point scales (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*).

Exploratory factor analysis using Principal Components factor extraction was performed in order to validate the underlying factor structure of the self-construal scale. Varimax rotation was conducted, and the scree plot produced by the analysis confirmed the bi-dimensionality of the scale. Hence, the existence of independence and interdependence as the major underlying factors was validated. Furthermore, results of the analysis indicated that the independence factor accounted for 21.2% of the item variance, while 13.8% of the item variance was accounted for by the interdependence factor. Thus, both factors accounted for 35% of the total item variance. Two items (pertaining to the interdependence factor) were excluded from the analysis due to their low correlation with the principal factor. With the exception of these two items, the factor analysis confirmed that the remaining items loaded on

the proper respective factors. The resultant scale consisted of 15 items measuring the independence dimension, and 12 items measuring the interdependence dimension. Overall coefficient alpha reliabilities were .86 for the independence factor, and .79 for the interdependence factor. Overall reliability on the independence measures was .86 (.76 for Hong Kong, .87 for Hawai'i, .82 for the mainland U.S.) and .80 (.67 for Hong Kong, .80 for Hawai'i, .81 for the mainland U.S.) for the interdependence measures. These reliabilities are higher than the reliabilities typically found in previous scales such as Singelis' (1994) Self-Construal Scale. Given the lower reliabilities among participants from Hong Kong, however, we need to treat the results with caution.

Motivation to deceive for self- versus other-benefit. A Deception Motivation Scale (DMS) was created to measure peoples' motivation to engage in deception either to enhance the self or to protect the other or a third party. Self-benefit and other-benefit items were designed to measure deceptive motivation and were partially based on Camden et al.'s (1984) Taxonomy of Social Motivations. Self-oriented motivation was measured by means of nine items which represent one's willingness to engage in deception for the enhancement or protection of the self. Deceptions for self-benefit are cases in which the intended reward is to benefit the liar (Camden et al., 1984). Deceptions for other-benefit are cases in which the intended reward is to benefit the non-lying interactants in conversation (Camden et al., 1984). The goal contained in each of the other-face items is that the speaker seeks to preserve the face of the listener. Other-oriented motivation was measured using seven items which exemplify one's willingness to use deception for the protection of the other (see Appendix B). Participants rated the self- and other-oriented motivation items on 7-point scales (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*). The average reliability for self-benefiting motivation items was .74 (.62 for Hong Kong, .79 for Hawai'i, .75 for the mainland U.S.), and the reliability for other-benefiting motivation items was .68 (.63 for Hong Kong, .67 for Hawai'i, .74 for the mainland U.S.).

Self- versus Other-Benefit Situations

To account for situational influences upon one's choice of response strategy, four different versions of the questionnaire were created. To ensure generality, two different scenarios for each situation type (i.e., self- versus other-benefit) were created, based on scenarios used in Holtgraves' (1986) study. Appendix A presents a complete account of the situations provided to the participants.

Message Response Types

Holtgraves (1986) proposed four basic message response types: (a) direct and true, (b) direct and false, (c) indirect and evasive, and (d) indirect and irrelevant. Based on Holtgraves' typology we adopt a modified deceptive communication typology consisting of the following response strategies: (a) Lie (Direct and False), (b) Half-Truth (Indirect and False), (3) Evasive response (Indirect and Evasive), and (d)

Irrelevant assertion. Given our focus is on deceptive communication, we omitted Holtgraves' "Direct and true" category, and instead added Half-Truth (Indirect and False).

Holtgrave's study was conducted in the U.S. among English language speakers. The cross-cultural equivalences of these typologies have not been established (see Brislin, 2000, for detailed discussion on this issue). There are numerous studies investigating the speech act performance of native speakers of different languages. It has become evident in such studies and comparative studies that the typology of speech acts appears to be universal. However, speakers of different languages can differ in the strategies they choose (Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989, among others).

Possible deceptive message responses were generated in answer to each of the deception provoking scenarios previously mentioned. Probable responses represented the four main deceptive message response types: Outright Lie, Half-Truth, Evasive response, and Irrelevant assertion. Table 1 presents a sample of two sets of deceptive message responses (for self- and other-benefit situations) used to measure people's perceptions of the deceptiveness of each of the four main response strategies and their likelihood of use of each of the four strategy types.

Perceived deceptiveness of message response strategies. Items were also included to measure individuals' perceptions of the deceptiveness of each of the four main message responses. Two 7-point bi-polar scales (1 = *I feel this is not a deceptive statement*, 7 = *I feel this is a deceptive statement*; 1 = *I feel this is not a misleading answer*, 7 = *I feel this is a misleading answer*) were used to accomplish this end. Participants were asked to rate the degree to which they perceived each of the four message responses to be deceptive. The estimated unit-length reliability coefficients for the deceptiveness ratings ranged from .52 to .69 ($M = .60$) for Hong Kong participants, .67 to .78 ($M = .73$) Hawai'i participants, and .61 to .81 ($M = .73$) for mainland U.S. participants. The estimated reliability of the measure of the perceived deceptiveness of the message response strategies was moderate for all three locations: .68 to .82 ($M = .75$) for the Hong Kong participants, .80 to .88 ($M = .84$) for the Hawai'i participants, and .76 to .90 ($M = .84$) for the mainland U.S. participants.

Likelihood of use of deceptive response strategies. To assess peoples' likelihood of using particular deceptive responses in a given context, each participant was provided with a hypothetical scenario followed by four possible message response items. Participants were asked to rate on two 7-point scales (1 = *it is unlikely that I would use this*, 7 = *it is likely that I would use this*; 1 = *I would be unwilling to use this*, 7 = *I would be willing to use this*) the extent to which they would be likely to use each of the possible responses. As an estimate of the reliability of the unit-length measure for each response, average correlations across the four situations were calculated between the two items for each response. The estimated unit-length reliability coefficients for the likelihood of use ranged from .83 to .95 ($M = .89$) for Hong Kong participants, .78 to .87 ($M = .82$) for Hawai'i participants, and .83 to .91 ($M = .88$) for the mainland U.S. participants. Using the Spearman-Brown formula, we calculated the estimated reliability of the

two-item measure based on the given unit-length reliabilities: .91 to .97 ($M = .94$) for the Hong Kong participants, .88 to .93 ($M = .90$) for Hawai'i participants, and .91 to .95 ($M = .94$) for the mainland U.S. participants.

Results

Cultural Samples and Self-Construals

To examine whether samples from the three locations (Hong Kong, Hawai'i, and the U.S. Mainland) were representative of the independent and interdependent self-construals, respectively, one-way ANOVA tests were performed. Results revealed that the mainland United States participants showed the highest independent orientations ($M = 6.05$, $SD = .63$), followed by participants from Hawai'i ($M = 5.65$, $SD = .91$) and Hong Kong ($M = 5.13$, $SD = .64$), $F(2,663) = 89.94$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .21$. Furthermore, the differences in independent orientations among the three groups were statistically significant at the .05 level, according to Dunnett's test of mean differences. In terms of the interdependent dimension of self-construal, results showed that the Hong Kong participants possessed the greatest interdependent orientations ($M = 4.56$, $SD = .60$), followed by participants from Hawai'i ($M = 4.35$, $SD = .91$) and the mainland U.S. participants ($M = 4.17$, $SD = .86$), $F(2,663) = 13.27$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .04$. Again, Dunnett's test revealed that the differences between the three groups were significant at the .05 level. Indeed, the selected samples differed in their cultural orientations in the expected order for both independence and interdependence (Table 2).

H1a and b: The Independent and Interdependent Dimensions of Self-Construal and the Motivation to Use Deception

It was expected that the independent and interdependent dimensions of self-construal would bear significant predictive power in determining people's general willingness to engage in deceptive communication. Specifically, it was hypothesized that higher degrees of independence would be associated with a lower motivation to engage in deception in general (H1a), while higher degrees of interdependence would be

Table 2 Cross-Cultural Comparisons of the Self-Construal Types

	Self-Construal Type					
	Independence			Interdependence		
Culture	Mean*	*SD*	*n*	Mean*	*SD*	*n*
Hong Kong	5.13	.64	226	4.56	.60	226
Hawai'i	5.65	.91	209	4.35	.91	209
Mainland U.S.	6.05	.63	229	4.17	.86	229
Total	5.61	.83	664	4.36	.81	664

*1 = low, 7 = high.

associated with a greater motivation to engage in deception in general (H1b). To test these hypotheses, hierarchical regression analyses were conducted. Culture of origin (i.e., Hong Kong, Hawai'i, Mainland U.S.) was entered into the first block of the regression model to determine if culture alone would emerge as a significant predictor of deceptive motivation. The independent and interdependent dimensions of self-construal were entered into the second block to determine the extent to which the self-construal dimensions contributed significant incremental variance beyond that due to nationality alone. Finally, interactions between culture and the independence/interdependence dimensions were entered into the third block to discern the possibility of significant culture by self-construal interaction effects on the dependent variables. However, because an initial analysis involving the interaction variables did not yield any significant effects, they were excluded from further analyses.

As expected, the independent and interdependent dimensions of self-construal were able to account for a greater proportion of variance beyond that due to nationality in predicting overall motivation to use deception. More specifically, nationality was found to account for only 2% of the variance in predicting overall motivation to use deception, whereas the independent and interdependent dimensions of self-construal were able to account for a significantly larger portion of the total variance, $R = .32$, $R^2 = .10$, $F(4,659) = 18.38$, $p < .001$, $F_{\Delta} = 29.42$, $p < .001$.

Consistent with Hypothesis 1a, an inspection of the beta coefficients associated with each of the predictor variables revealed a significant negative association between degree of independence and the overall motivation to engage in deceptive communication, $\beta = -.18$, $t = -4.30$, $p < .001$, *partial* $r = -.17$. Likewise, in support of Hypothesis 1b, coefficient betas revealed a significant positive association between the dimension of interdependence and overall deceptive motivation, $\beta = .24$, $t = 6.27$, $p < .001$, *partial* $r = .24$. Further analysis (see Levine & Cruz, 1991) comparing the unstandardized beta coefficients of the independent and interdependent dimensions revealed that the motivation to deceive was significantly greater for those scoring higher on interdependence than on independence, $t(660) = 7.36$, $p < .001$. Thus, consistent with Hypothesis 1a and 1b, higher degrees of independence were related to lower levels of motivation to deceive, whereas higher degrees of interdependence were associated with a greater overall motivation to engage in deceptive communication.

H2a and b: The Independent and Interdependent Dimensions of Self-Construal and the Motivation to Use of Deception for Self- versus Other-Benefit

Hypothesis 2a predicted that the strength of an individual's independent self-construal would be more highly associated with self-oriented deception motivation than other-oriented deception motivation. On the other hand, we predicted that the strength of an individual's interdependent self-construal would be more highly associated with other-oriented deception motivation than self-oriented deception motivation (H2b). Two separate regression analyses were conducted with self-benefit motivation and other-benefit motivation as the criterion variables.

Consistent with expectations, the independent and interdependent dimensions of self-construal were able to account for a significantly greater proportion of variance beyond that due to nationality in predicting motivation to use deception for self-benefit. When entered into the first step of the model, nationality accounted for less than 2% of the total variance in predicting self-benefit motivation. However, when the independent and interdependent dimensions of self-construal were entered into the model, there was a significant increase in the proportion of variance that could be accounted for by the overall model, $R = .21$, $R^2 = .04$, $F(4,659) = 7.29$, $p < .001$, $F_\Delta = 8.05$, $p < .001$.

Contrary to Hypothesis 2a, an inspection of the beta coefficients associated with each of the predictor variables revealed a significant negative association between the dimension of independence and the motivation to deceive for self-benefit, $\beta = -.12$, $t = -2.70$, $p < .01$, *partial* $r = -.11$. Furthermore, analysis results also revealed a significant positive association between the interdependence dimension and the motivation to deceive for self-benefit, $\beta = .11$, $t = 2.92$, $p < .01$, *partial* $r = .11$. Hence, whereas higher degrees of independence were associated with a lower motivation to deceive for self-benefit, higher degrees of interdependence were found to be related to higher levels of motivation to deceive for the benefit of the self. Follow-up analyses comparing the slopes generated by the separate regression equations revealed that the difference between independence and interdependence in the motivation to deceive for self-benefit was indeed significant, $t(660) = 8.99$, $p < .001$.

When other-benefit motivation was specified as the criterion variable, again, the independent and interdependent dimensions of self-construal were better able to predict one's motivation for engaging in deception for the benefit of the other. Specifically, when entered into the first step of the regression, subject nationality could only account for 2% of the total variance. However, when the dimensions of self-construal were entered into the model, the addition accounted for a significantly greater portion of the total variance, $R = .37$, $R^2 = .13$, $F(4,659) = 25.48$, $p < .001$, $F_\Delta = 45.07$, $p < .001$.

An inspection of the beta coefficients associated with each of the self-construal dimensions indicated that, consistent with H2b, interdependence was positively associated with the motivation to deceive for other-benefit, $\beta = .30$, $t = 8.14$, $p < .001$, *partial* $r = .30$. On the other hand, the dimension of independence was found to be negatively associated with the motivation to deceive for other-benefit, $\beta = -.19$, $t = -4.74$, $p < .001$, *partial* $r = -.18$. Thus, consistent with the hypothesis, higher levels of interdependence were found to be associated with higher levels of motivation to deceive for other-benefit. Conversely, higher degrees of independence were associated with lower levels of motivation to deceive for the benefit of the other. Follow-up analyses comparing the slopes generated by the separate regression equations revealed that the difference between independence and interdependence in the motivation to deceive for other-benefit was indeed significant, $t(660) = 8.60$, $p < .001$.

Overall, results from the analyses suggest that higher levels of interdependence were related to a greater inclination to use deception in any circumstance, whether it serves to benefit the self or the other. Higher levels of independence, on the other

hand, were associated with a general unwillingness to use deception regardless of whether it is used to protect one's own face or to protect the face of the other (Table 3).

H3a and b: The Independent and Interdependent Dimensions of Self-Construal and the Perceived Deceptiveness of Particular Message Response Strategies

It was speculated earlier that people who emphasize different dimensions of self-construal may possess different perceptions of which strategies may be considered deceptive. In Hypothesis 3a, we predicted that degree of independence would be positively associated with judgments of the various response strategies as "deceptive." Conversely, in Hypothesis 3b, we predicted that degree of interdependence would be associated with judging the various response strategies as "not deceptive." A similar method to the one reported in the previous section was used to test these hypotheses. Regressions were performed entering culture into the first block, the dimensions of self-construal in the second, and the two-way interaction terms in the third block.

As expected, the independent and interdependent dimensions of self-construal were able to account for significantly more variance beyond that due to culture in predicting the perceived deceptiveness of the Outright Lie, $R = .25$, $R^2 = .06$, $F(4,657) = 10.70$, $p < .001$, $F_\Delta = 14.27$, $p < .001$, the Half-Truth statement, $R = .16$, $R^2 = .02$, $F(4,656) = 4.04$, $p < .01$, $F_\Delta = 3.73$, $p < .05$, the Evasive response, $R = .20$, $R^2 = .04$, $F(4,655) = 6.77$, $p < .001$, $F_\Delta = 5.64$, $p < .01$, and the Irrelevant assertion, $R = .25$, $R^2 = .06$, $F(4,650) = 10.85$, $p < .001$, $F_\Delta = 8.58$, $p < .001$. An inspection of the beta weights associated with each of the predictors revealed a positive relationship between the dimension of independence and the perceived deceptiveness of the Outright Lie, $\beta = .20$, $t = 4.73$, $p < .001$, *partial* $r = .18$, the Half-Truth statement, $\beta = .10$, $t = 2.28$, $p < .05$, *partial* $r = .09$, the Evasive response, $\beta = .12$, $t = 2.88$, $p < .01$, *partial* $r = .11$, and the Irrelevant assertion, $\beta = .16$, $t = 3.77$, $p < .001$, *partial* $r = .15$. Conversely, a series of negative relationships were found between the dimension of interdependence and the perceived deceptiveness of the Outright Lie, $\beta = -.09$, $t = -2.40$, $p = .05$, *partial* $r = -.09$, the Half-Truth, $\beta = -.06$, $t = -1.46$, $p = .15$, *partial* $r = -.06$, the Evasive response, $\beta = -.07$, $t = -1.67$, $p = .10$, *partial* $r = -.07$, and the Irrelevant assertion, $\beta = -.06$, $t = -1.63$, $p = .10$, *partial* $r = -.06$.

Table 3 Regression Analysis of Self- versus Other-Motivations for Deception Among the Independent and Interdependent Dimensions of Self-Construal

	Self-Benefit		Other-Benefit	
	Betas	Partial *r*	Betas	Partial *r*
Independence	−.12*	−.11*	−.19**	−.18**
Interdependence	.11*	.11*	.30**	.30**

*$p < .01$; **$p < .001$.

Follow-up comparisons of the beta coefficients corresponding to the independent and interdependent variables revealed that interdependence scores differed significantly from independence scores on the perceived deceptiveness of the Outright Lie, $t(658) = 5.11$, $p < .001$, the Half-Truth statement, $t(657) = 2.70$, $p < .01$, the Evasive response, $t(656) = 3.37$, $p < .001$, and the Irrelevant assertion, $t(651) = 3.86$, $p < .001$. Thus, the higher one's degree of interdependence, the less he or she perceived the various message response strategies to be deceptive. Specifically, those scoring higher on interdependence were significantly more likely than those scoring higher on independence to rate the Outright Lie, the Half-Truth statement, the Evasive response, and the Irrelevant assertion as "not deceptive." These findings provide support for the proposed hypotheses and will be discussed in the forthcoming section of this paper (Table 4).

H4a and b: The Independent and Interdependent Dimensions of Self-Construal and the Likelihood of Use of Particular Deceptive Response Strategies

We predicted that the independent and interdependent dimensions of self-construal would be significant predictors of one's likelihood of using various deceptive strategies. Specifically, we hypothesized that higher degrees of independence would be associated with a lower likelihood of using the various deceptive message response strategies (H4a). Relatedly, we expected that higher degrees of interdependence would be related to a greater preference for using the various deception strategies (H4b). The proposed hypotheses were tested using a series of hierarchical regression analyses in which the likelihood of use of the four different types of deceptive responses (i.e., Outright Lie, Half-Truth, Evasive assertion, Irrelevant assertion) served as the criterion variables. Similar to previous analyses, culture was entered into the first block of the regression, and the independent and interdependent dimensions of self-construal were entered into the second block to determine the proportion of unique variance contributed over and above that due to culture.

As anticipated, the independent and interdependent dimensions of self-construal were found to be significant predictors of the likelihood of use of the Evasive response and the Irrelevant assertion. Most importantly, while culture alone was not able to predict the likelihood of use of the Evasive response, $R = .03$, $R^2 = .00$, $F(2,660) = .35$, *n.s.*, the independent and interdependent dimensions of self-construal were able to add significant predictability to the overall model, $R = .20$, $R^2 = .04$, $F(4,658) = 6.61$, $p < .001$, $F_\Delta = 12.86$, $p < .001$. Likewise, in the case of the Irrelevant assertion, the independent and interdependent dimensions of self-construal were better able than culture to predict the likelihood of use of this particular response strategy, $R = .20$, $R^2 = .04$, $F(4,653) = 6.78$, $p < .001$, $F_\Delta = 9.93$, $p < .001$.

An inspection of the beta weights associated with the predictor variables revealed that, consistent with the hypotheses, higher degrees of independence were negatively associated with the likelihood of use of the Evasive response strategy, $\beta = -.16$, $t = -3.62$, $p < .001$, *partial* $r = -.14$, and the Irrelevant assertion, $\beta = -.18$, $t = -4.09$, $p < .001$, *partial* $r = -.16$. On the other hand, higher degrees of interdependence

were found to be positively associated with both the use of the Evasive response, $\beta = .14$, $t = 3.49$, $p < .001$, *partial* $r = .14$, and the Irrelevant assertion, $\beta = .07$, $t = 1.68$, $p = .09$, *partial* $r = .07$. Supplementary analyses were then performed to detect for significant differences in the slopes generated by the separate regression equations (see Levine & Cruz, 1991). Results indicated that those characterized by higher degrees of interdependence were indeed significantly more likely than those scoring high on independence to be willing to use the Evasive response strategy, $t(659) = 4.98$, $p < .001$ and the Irrelevant assertion, $t(654) = 4.29$, $p < .001$, as acceptable message responses.

Altogether, culture alone was insufficient for predicting one's likelihood of use of the Evasive and Irrelevant assertion response strategies. However, information about the independent and interdependent dimensions of self-construal was able to improve overall predictive ability. In line with the proposed hypotheses, degree of independence was found to be negatively associated with the likelihood of use of both the Evasive and Irrelevant assertion response strategies, whereas degree of interdependence was revealed to be positively associated with a willingness to use these same deceptive responses. Findings also indicated that those scoring higher on interdependence were significantly more likely than those scoring higher on independence to use the Evasive and Irrelevant assertion strategies as acceptable message responses. On the other hand, self-construals were not significantly related to the likelihood of using the other two message responses (Half-Truth and Lie) (Table 4).

H5a and b: Situational Influences on the Independent and Interdependent Dimensions of Self-Construal and the Likelihood of Use of Particular Deceptive Response Strategies

Hypothesis 5a predicted that higher degrees of independence would be related to a greater likelihood of using the various deceptive response strategies (i.e., Outright Lie, Half-Truth, Evasive response, Irrelevant assertion) in self-benefit situations rather than in other-benefit situations. Conversely, in Hypothesis 5b, we proposed that higher levels of interdependence would be associated with a greater likelihood of

Table 4 Ratings of Deceptive Strategies along the Dimensions of Likelihood of Use and Perceived Deceptiveness

	Beta Weights			
	Lie	Half-Truth	Evasive	Irrelevant
Likelihood of Use				
Independence	−.03	−.01	−.16**	−.18**
Interdependence	.07	.05	.14**	.07
Perceived Deceptiveness				
Independence	.20**	.10*	.12**	.16**
Interdependence	−.09*	−.06	−.07	−.06

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$.

using the various deceptive response strategies in other-benefit situations rather than in self-benefit situations. Regression analyses similar to the ones previously reported were conducted to test the proposed hypotheses. Notably, the two-way interaction terms involving the independent and interdependent dimensions of self-construal and self- versus other-benefit situation were included in the third step of the model to account for the effects of the situation.

Results indicated that the two-way interaction between self-construal (i.e., independence–interdependence) and situation (i.e., self- versus other-benefit) was a significant predictor of the Evasive response, $R = .22$, $R^2 = .05$, $F(4,658) = 8.05$, $p < .001$, $F_\Delta = 4.02$, $p < .05$, and the Irrelevant assertion, $R = .22$, $R^2 = .05$, $F(4,653) = 7.99$, $p < .001$, $F_\Delta = 3.88$, $p < .05$. Further inspection of the beta coefficients revealed that degree of independence was positively associated with the use of the Evasive response in self-benefit situations, $\beta = .06$, $t = 1.27$, $p = .21$, *partial* $r = .05$, but not in other-benefit situations, $\beta = -.06$, $t = -1.27$, $p < .21$, *partial* $r = -.05$. Similarly, degree of independence was also found to be positively associated with the use of the Irrelevant assertion in self-benefit situations, $\beta = .11$, $t = 2.25$, $p < .05$, *partial* $r = .09$, but not in other-benefit situations, $\beta = -.11$, $t = -2.25$, $p < .05$, *partial* $r = -.09$.

On the other hand, degree of interdependence was discovered to be positively associated with the willingness to use the Evasive response in other-benefit situations, $\beta = .12$, $t = 2.34$, $p < .05$, *partial* $r = .09$, but not in self-benefit situations, $\beta = -.12$, $t = -2.34$, $p < .05$, *partial* $r = -.09$. Likewise, degree of interdependence was also found to be positively associated with the use of the Irrelevant assertion in other-benefit situations, $\beta = .12$, $t = 2.34$, $p < .05$, *partial* $r = .09$, but not in self-benefit situations, $\beta = -.12$, $t = -2.34$, $p < .05$, *partial* $r = -.09$.

To directly address the hypotheses, follow-up analyses were then conducted to determine the significance of the interactions generated by separate regression equations (see Levine & Cruz, 1991). Results indicated that those scoring higher on independence were more likely than those scoring higher on interdependence to use deception in the form of the Evasive response, in situations involving self-benefit, $t(659) = 2.37$, $p < .05$, rather than other-benefit, $t(659) = -2.37$, $p < .05$., and also more likely to use the Irrelevant assertion in situations involving self-benefit, $t(654) = 2.70$, $p < .01$, rather than other-benefit, $t(654) = -2.70$, $p < .01$. Put another way, those scoring higher on interdependence were more likely than those scoring higher on independence to use deception in the form of the Evasive response, in situations involving other-benefit, $t(659) = 2.37$, $p < .05$, rather than self-benefit, $t(659) = -2.37$, $p < .05$., and also more likely to use the Irrelevant assertion in situations involving other-benefit, $t(654) = 2.70$, $p < .01$, rather than self-benefit, $t(654) = -2.70$, $p < .01$. Taken together, the findings indicate that those scoring higher on independence were more willing to use the Evasive and Irrelevant message response strategies in self-benefit situations rather than other benefit situations, while those scoring higher on interdependence were more willing to use these strategies in other-benefit situations rather than in situations involving self-benefit (Table 5).

Table 5 The Relationship Between Self-Construals and the Ratings of Deceptive Strategies Across Self- versus Other-Benefit Situations

	Beta Weights			
Likelihood of Use	Lie	Half-Truth	Evasive	Irrelevant
Independence				
Self-Benefit	.05	−.14**	.06	.11*
Other-Benefit	−.05	.14**	−.06	−.11*
Interdependence				
Self-Benefit	.05	−.05	−.12*	−.07
Other-Benefit	−.05	.05	.12*	.07

*significant at .05 level; **significant at .01 level.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships between cultural self-identity, and the motivations and perceptions associated with deceptive communication. Furthermore, we also endeavored to investigate cultural variations in the willingness to use various deception strategies as well as the effects of the situation (i.e., self- versus other-benefit) on one's choice of deceptive responses.

As expected, we found a significant negative relationship between the strength of one's independent self-construal and overall deception motivation (H1a). Furthermore, degree of independence was negatively related not only to the motivation to deceive for other-benefit deception situations (H2a) but also for self-benefit situations. The findings mentioned above are consistent with past research regarding the general tendency of individualistic cultures to value the truth (Koper, 1994; McCornack & Parks, 1986). In individualistic cultures, which place a high premium on independence, the morality of a human being is determined primarily by one's willingness to speak the "truth" above all else. Hence, despite the consequences, there is a sense of "honor" in having brought matters out into the open. The famous proverb endorsed by American culture, "Lay all of your cards on the table," implies that one should reveal the contents of what one holds in the "black box"—the mind. More importantly, the implication is that one should not keep one's true thoughts hidden, as doing so is much akin to the conniving card player who tries to deceive his or her opponents. The results of this particular study provide further support for the notion that individuals who are characterized by higher degrees of independence do indeed exhibit a comparatively lower degree of motivation to use deception than those characterized by higher degrees of interdependence. Higher degrees of independence were found to be negatively related to one's motivation to use deception overall. Furthermore, higher scores on independence were found to be negatively related to the motivation to use deception regardless of whether deception was used to benefit the self or to benefit the other.

By contrast, a significant positive association between the strength of one's interdependent self-construal and overall deception motivation was discovered

(H1b). Moreover, degree of interdependence was positively related to the motivation to deceive not only for other-oriented motivation (H2b), but also for self-oriented motivation. These findings are consistent with the idea that those characterized by high degrees of interdependence are willing to stray from the truth if not telling the truth serves to promote harmonious relationships. Interdependent relationships are characterized by mutual concern for the interests and outcomes of the other (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Those characterized by high degrees of interdependence view themselves as inextricably bound by social relationships. Thereby, it is fathomable that through maintaining and protecting the face of others, one also maintains his or her own face. Likewise, threats such as an embarrassment to one's own face can pose a threat or cause embarrassment to the face of others involved. Hence, especially if the other benefits from the deception, those characterized by high degrees of interdependence will be motivated to use deceit if the central purpose of the deception is to maintain a sense of relational harmony.

The data also support the notion that the strength of one's independent and interdependent self-construal is systematically related to different perceptions of what is considered to be deceptive (H3). In this study, higher degrees of independence were associated with perceptions of all four deceptive message response strategies as being increasingly more "deceptive" in nature. According to Doi (1986), in the United States, it is extremely important for the public and private selves to remain consistent. When the public and private selves are discrepant, an individual is considered duplicitous, two-faced, and hypocritical. Thus, for those characterized by higher degrees of independence, consistency between thoughts and actions is highly essential. The various forms of deception essentially entail discrepancies between what is truly felt and what one says. Hence, it is understandable why increasing scores on independence were related to perceptions of the various deception strategies as being increasingly more "deceptive" in nature.

Interestingly, findings of this particular research have generally yielded a somewhat opposite trend for those characterized by high degrees of interdependence. Specifically, increasing levels of interdependence were associated with decreasing perceptions of the outright lie, half-truth, evasive, and irrelevant message responses as "deceptive." Altogether, these findings seem to implicate that perhaps the altering or rejection of truthful information is not typically considered "deception" in collectivist cultures. Rather, this manipulation of the pure, unsparing truth is a necessary means by which harmony is maintained and preserved. It seems that it is the salience of "face-concern" that keeps forms of deceptive strategies from being perceived as "deceptive" in collectivistic cultures. These findings garner further support for the notion that highly interdependent individuals may consider any type of alterations of the truth to be necessary for the preservation and maintenance of relational harmony. Ironically, for those possessing highly interdependent self-identities, being "true" to others entails being able to tell untruths when doing so will save the face of the other.

We also predicted that strength of one's independent and interdependent self-construal would significantly impact one's likelihood of using certain deceptive strategies (H4). Not surprisingly, among the four deception strategies, we found that

degree of independence was negatively related to the willingness to use the evasive and irrelevant message response strategies. Again, this finding is consistent with prior research on the individualistic bias for truth-telling (Gilbert, Krull, & Malone, 1990; Koper, 1994; McCornack & Parks, 1986). In the United States, individuals are discouraged from substituting deceit in place of truth. Additionally, individuals characterized by high degrees of independence generally thrive on being true to the self; they prefer to speak what they truly feel to emphasize their own uniqueness. Thus, it is understandable that those characterized by high degrees of independence would be less likely to use the evasive and irrelevant message responses due to the notion that doing so does not allow for the expression of one's true self. Among the four deception strategies, those characterized by high degrees of interdependence were found to be willing to use the Evasive and Irrelevant assertion response strategies. There was no significant relationship between interdependence and the likelihood of using the other three deception strategies (lie, half-truth, irrelevant strategies).

We also found that those with highly independent self-construals were unwilling to use the evasive and irrelevant responses to carry out their deceptions, especially in an other-benefit situation (H5a). Those characterized by higher degrees of independence place a great degree of emphasis on direct and open communication (Kim, Sharkey, & Singelis, 1994; Kim et al., 1996). Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey (1988) have claimed that communication in the United States affords little room for the cultivation of ambiguity, and therefore, people tend to speak their minds freely using direct utterances. Furthermore, individualistic values foster the norms of honesty and openness, and honesty and openness are achieved through the use of precise, straightforward language behaviors. The irrelevant message response strategy, however, seeks to avoid addressing the topic at hand altogether. It is a diversionary response in which attention is drawn away from the topic at issue.

Thus, given that the emphasis on direct communication is highly independent in nature, it is understandable how individuals with highly independent selves would tend to avoid using the Irrelevant assertion strategy. To explain, the Irrelevant assertion is likely to be viewed as almost too indirect and usually induces suspicion. Consider, for example, Person A asks Person B for his or her opinion of Person A's new shirt. Person B thinks the new shirt is absolutely distasteful, so Person B evasively answers, "Do you know what time it is? We're late. Let's go." Person A will most likely feel that the response is much too indirect and that Person B is being elusive. It seems reasonable to presume that to avoid detection, as well as to escape being labeled shifty, evasive, gutless, or "chicken," the highly independent individual would prefer to avoid using the Irrelevant assertion message response strategy. Consistent with prior research (e.g., Kim et al., 1994, 1996) individuals characterized by high degrees of independence continue to maintain a preference for direct styles of communication, and especially in the realm of deception, those styles are biased towards being direct in telling the truth.

Given that the central driving force among collectivists is the preservation of harmony within their social networks (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), it is logical how

sometimes speaking the cold, hard truth can only serve to disrupt harmonious relationships. The adoption of "face-giving" behavior in situations inviting deception is particularly valued among those characterized by high degrees of interdependence as a means of maintaining a sense of relational harmony. However, this sense of relational harmony may only work with others who also posses the same interdependent self construal; if these "deceptive face-giving" behaviors are used with those who emphasize their independent self construal, those searching for harmony may, instead, find that their choice of behaviors results in being labeled liars, manipulative, disreputable, or untrustworthy. Likewise, those independents who use direct and honest behavior with interdependent partners may find that their partners view them as crude, crass, insensitive, and impolite.

In summary, the major practical implication of this research is that, when speakers from different cultural backgrounds interact, the communication problems that develop can, in part, be accounted for in terms of the differing perceptions that individuals have of what deceptive communication fully entails. Additionally, communication difficulties can also be attributed to the notion that individuals of differing cultural identities possess dissimilar motivations toward deceptive communication. Whereas those high in independent orientation may engage in interaction with a bias toward being truthful, those with highly interdependent selves may take part in an interaction with self-face and other-face needs foremost in mind, and this may inevitably cause them to assume that deception will occur in conversation. Pragmatic failure, or the inability to understand what is being said, occurs when the perceptions of one community are assumed to be applicable in another community (Leech, 1983). This article has shown that both the independent and interdependent construals were able to systematically predict one's motivation to deceive, as well as one's perceptions of what constitutes deceptive communication. More importantly, findings relating to the independent and interdependent dimensions of self-construal tended to be in the opposite direction. Hence, we are able to comprehend how cultural misunderstandings of this nature might occur between members of individualistic and collectivistic cultures. If individuals are made aware of the differing motivations for and perceptions of deceptive communication, they may become more understanding and accommodating to the conversational styles of the other, and thus, communication misunderstandings can be minimized.

Implications for Future Theorizing in the Realm of Deceptive Communication

The findings of the present study shed a long overdue perspective on the ways in which deceptive communication can be differentially regarded and enacted by members of differing cultural backgrounds. Given systematic cultural differences in the motivations for and perceptions associated with deceptive communication, researchers can no longer continue to investigate deceptive communication phenomena without regard for significant cultural differences. Findings of the present study inform current theorizing regarding deceptive communication

motivation as well as the factors that influence both the verbal and nonverbal cues associated with communicating deceptively.

First, findings of the current study call to attention the relevance of cultural nuances in investigating the effects of motivation on deceptive behavior. The various effects of motivation on both verbal and nonverbal deceptive performances have been studied by numerous researchers (i.e., DePaulo & Kirkendol, 1989; DePaulo, Kirkendol, Tang, & O'Brien, 1988; DePaulo et al., 1983). DePaulo and colleagues (1983, 1988, 1989) theorized that greater levels of motivation should impair deceptive nonverbal performances but facilitate verbal performance. The explanation they provide for this effect is that there are certain automatic links between emotions and nonverbal behavior that are not present for the vocal channel. Particularly, when people are highly motivated to deceive, they are said to experience a sense of fear which maps itself directly onto bodily experience. People then have a difficult time attempting to override and control the automatic link between emotion and behavior. Given the findings of the present study, that those characterized by high degrees of interdependence were found to be highly motivated to deceive for both self- and other-benefit, while those characterized by higher degrees of independence were generally lower in their motivation to deceive, certain implications follow. Accordingly, if it is the case that higher levels of motivation should result in greater impairments in performance, we should witness a high level of nonverbal impairments among those high in interdependence. However, in light of the critical finding that those higher in interdependence perceived outright lies as *not* deceptive, one is not likely to witness the same type of automatic nonverbal response that stems from experiencing negative emotion. If there is no negative emotion tied to deceiving, it follows logically then, that there should be no automatic impaired nonverbal response. Thus, the extent to which the motivation impairment effect can account for actual impairments in nonverbal performance for those of the interdependent orientation is somewhat limited.

Second, if deceptive communication is not regarded as a condemnable practice to be avoided in more interdependently oriented cultures, individuals who are high in interdependent-orientation are not likely to experience the same degree of guilt that is theorized to result from engaging in deceptive communication. For highly interdependent individuals, deceptive communication plays a fundamental role in the maintenance of "trouble free" relationships. Therefore, the guilt that has been shown to typically accompany deception in more independently oriented cultures is not likely to be experienced to the same degree by more interdependently oriented individuals. Accordingly, if one does not experience a high level of guilt in response to communicating deceptively, one is not likely to exhibit cues of arousal. Zuckerman et al.'s (1981) four factor theory posits that nonverbal cues related to deceptive communication are the result of four major factors: (1) guilt due to an awareness of not telling the truth, (2) arousal associated with telling a lie, (3) cognitive effort necessary to construct a plausible lie, and (4) attempted control of the behavioral channels under one's immediate control. However, the central problematic assumption embedded in this theory is that fundamentally, all cultures endorse the same

value toward speaking the truth. Nonverbal "leakage," then, is said to be the result of not having told the truth. DePaulo and Kirkendol (1989) posited that "people are betrayed by their own efforts. The more people deliberately try to control their nonverbal cues, the more out-of-control those cues get" (p. 60). However, this fact remains true only insofar as the culture endorses the notion that deceptive communication is inherently "immoral."

In a related vein, if it is the case that those characterized by high degrees of interdependence do not perceive lies as necessarily "deceptive" in nature, they are not likely to exhibit the same degree of arousal typically associated with engaging in deception. DeTurck and Miller (1985) purported that encoding a deceptive message increases communicators' arousal, and that the heightened arousal experienced during deception is manifest in particular verbal and nonverbal displays. While they were able to identify six verbal and nonverbal cues that reliably distinguished deceivers from truthtellers, a major limitation of their research is that participants were recruited from a large midwestern university located in the U.S. Thus, these findings remain limited to cultures which endorse higher degrees of independence rather than interdependence. Supposing a similar study was conducted employing samples characterized by lower degrees of independence and higher degrees of interdependence, the assumption that encoding a deceptive message increases arousal no longer holds true. Hence, it is highly likely that one will not witness the same constellation of verbal and nonverbal cues as exhibited by those of more independent orientation.

Examining deception from a cultural standpoint enables a more profound understanding of individual motives for deception. Additionally, examining deception from a cross-cultural perspective has lent greater insight into individuals' perceptions of what is considered to be a "deceptive" message. Future research in the realm of deceptive communication should not neglect to take cultural influences into account as this particular research implicates that they indeed have a significant impact on the motives for and perceptions associated with deceptive communication.

Note

[1] Since our theoretical focus was on an individual level (self-construals) correlate of cultural dimensions, differences in demographic characteristics in three locations does not invalidate our findings. Regardless of what other factors may have contributed to one's level of independence and interdependence, our findings focus on self-construals and deception communication.

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Appendix A

List of Four Deception Situations

(1) Self-Benefit. You are taking a class at the university that requires that students form groups and give a major group presentation in front of the class. Each member gives part of the group's presentation, but all group members get the same grade. This presentation is worth 30% of the final grade in the class. The night before the presentation, you were out late dancing. On the day of your group presentation, everyone but you does well. You were not well prepared and made several mistakes. You know that your part of the presentation was poorly done. After the class, one of your group members asks you, "What happened?"

(2) Self-Benefit. Imagine that you are involved in a group project in one of your classes. The class is required in your major, and it is important that you get a good grade. The final grade will depend to a great extent on how well the group project turns out. Your group planned to meet today to put together the final draft of its report which is due next week. Every member of the group was supposed to bring his/her portion of the paper to the meeting. However, you didn't do your assigned work. Rather than embarrassing yourself, you decided not to show up to the meeting. You also realized that the work load for the semester (a total of 16 credits) is more than you can competently handle. In the next class, one of your group members asks you, "What happened?"

(3) Other-Benefit. Imagine that your co-worker in an organization seems to be very interested in his/her looks, especially clothes. Today, you noticed that the person is wearing a shirt/blouse which you find truly ugly. It doesn't suit the person at all, in terms of color as well as style. The person approaches you and asks, "What do you think of my new shirt/blouse?" Now, you feel obligated to say something.

(4) Other-Benefit. Imagine that you work as an assistant manager in a large manufacturing firm. A friend of yours is working in your department. Employees in your department take turns giving monthly presentations announcing departmental accomplishments to the entire company. Your friend has just given this month's presentation for your department. It was a bad job; poorly prepared and poorly delivered. After your friend sits down, your friend asks you, "How did I do?" Now you have to say something to this person.

Appendix B

Items Measuring Self- vs. Other-Benefit Deception Motivations

(1) Self-Benefit deception motivations.

1. I might exaggerate my professional qualifications in order to get a promotion and a raise.
2. On a first date, I might embellish details about my background in order to make a good impression.
3. In order to initiate conversation with a stranger that I would like to meet, I might ask if we had met before even if we had not.
4. If someone that I need to avoid arrived at a party, I might pretend to be sick in order to make a quick exit.
5. I might make an excuse to leave a boring meeting by claiming to have just remembered that I had another appointment.
6. I might embellish my background or exaggerate details about the prestige of my job in order to get in with a popular peer group.
7. In order to avoid being criticized for an apparent lack of "taste," I might pretend to like the latest trends in fashion even though I really think they are ugly.
8. I might claim to have a closer relationship with a popular person than I really do in order to seem more socially desirable or competent.
9. If I met someone at a party that I wanted to see again, I might invent a phony reason to contact him/her.

(2) Other-Benefit deception motivations.

1. Even though my friend tells me a joke which I don't find funny at all, I would laugh anyway to avoid hurting his/her feelings.
2. If a friend brings a dish which tasted horrible, I might pretend I like the dish to avoid hurting his/her feelings.
3. If someone asks my opinion on a controversial issue, and I actually disagree with the popular view, I might choose to support the mainstream opinion rather than voice my own idea.
4. I might go along with what I know to be a weak suggestion or improbable idea if I fear that disagreeing would start an argument.
5. In order to avoid hurting my friend's feelings, I might pretend to like his/her new hairdo even though I really think it is ugly.
6. If my classmate asks my opinion about his/her paper which I think was carelessly done, I would not mention the bad points to avoid unpleasantness.
7. To avoid embarrassing my teacher, I may not correct my teacher even though he/she made an apparently incorrect statement regarding class material.