

Gender Dynamics in Team Communication: Analyzing Compliments Among Chinese College Athletes

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Abstract

Compliments are not only common polite speech acts but also play a crucial role in social interactions, significantly impacting team cohesion and dynamics in sports. This study investigates gender differences in compliment-giving strategies among Chinese college athletes, exploring how these differences influence team communication and social cohesion. We propose three hypotheses: (1) there are distinct compliment strategies between genders; (2) these strategies differ notably in contexts such as appearance, performance, and possessions; and (3) they vary according to perceived social status within the team. To test these hypotheses, we designed a series of interviews tailored to understand the nuances of compliment usage among male and female athletes. Our findings indicate that gender plays a significant role in shaping compliment strategies, which in turn affects interpersonal relationships within teams. The differences observed are partly attributed to the traditional roles and expectations imposed by society, which are still prevalent despite the influence of Western cultural norms on modern Chinese society. This research highlights that understanding these gender-specific communication strategies is essential for coaches and sports psychologists aiming to foster a more inclusive and supportive team environment. Accepting compliments, often perceived as politeness, can be seen as a form of positive reinforcement that enhances team morale and individual self-esteem, essential factors in athletic performance.

Keywords: Sports; Compliment strategy; Gender differences; College student, athletes.

Introduction

In the study of sports, effective communication is not merely a facilitative tool but a fundamental component that can significantly influence team cohesion, performance, and the overall dynamic of a group. This is particularly relevant in collegiate sports, where athletes often come from diverse backgrounds and must work together closely (Kinnick, 1998). Among the various forms of communication, the act of giving compliments is noteworthy (Lynall et al., 2015), serving not just as a polite interaction but as a mechanism that reinforces positive behaviors and fosters a supportive environment. This study focuses on exploring how gender influences compliment-giving behaviors among Chinese college athletes, aiming to uncover underlying patterns that may impact team interactions and performance (Gu, 1990). Gender dynamics in communication have been a subject of academic interest across various disciplines, including linguistics, psychology, and now, sports science (Klein, Krane, & Paule-Koba, 2018; Roh et al., 2016). Previous research has demonstrated that men and women often employ different communication strategies due to a complex interplay of societal norms, individual upbringing, and psychological factors (Murugesan & Hasan, 2016; Xu, Guo, & Kim, 2023). In sports teams, where effective

communication can directly affect performance outcomes and team morale, understanding these differences becomes crucial (Goolsby & Boniquit, 2017). This research is particularly important in the context of Chinese culture, which has its unique set of traditional values and norms influencing gender roles. While modern influences have started to reshape these roles, traditional Chinese cultural concepts like modesty and deference still profoundly impact how individuals interact. These cultural factors are compounded in sports settings, where the typically Western values of assertiveness and competitiveness are highly prized (Barbosa et al., 2014). The study proposes three hypotheses aimed at dissecting these interactions:

Gender-Specific Strategies: That there are inherent differences in the compliment-giving strategies between male and female athletes, influenced by traditional and contemporary societal norms.

Contextual Variations: That these strategies vary significantly not only between genders but also across different contexts such as appearance, performance, and possession, reflecting the values placed on these aspects by each gender.

Social Status Influence: That the compliment-giving behaviors are further influenced by the perceived social status within the team, which may differ by gender. To

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explore these hypotheses, a qualitative approach involving structured interviews with Chinese college athletes was adopted. This method was chosen to capture the nuances of compliment-giving in a natural setting, allowing for a deeper understanding of the implicit rules and meanings attached to these acts in a sports context. This introduction sets the stage for a comprehensive analysis of how compliment-giving can serve as a lens through which gender dynamics within sports teams are understood, revealing the complex interplay between communication, culture, and gender in the competitive world of collegiate sports.

Literature Review

The General Knowledge of Compliment

If we want to study gender difference in compliment, it is necessary for us to learn about some basic knowledge about compliment.

Definitions of Compliment

Many scholars have given out definitions to compliment. According to Holmes, “A compliment is a speech act which explicitly or implicitly attributes credit to someone other than the speaker, usually the person addressed, for some good (possession, characteristics, skill, etc.) which is positively valued by the speaker and the hearer.” (Holmes, 1986). It is pointed that “Compliments are primarily aimed at maintaining, enhancing, or supporting and addressee's face”. Herbert argues that compliments are specified in two conditions: the first one is that “compliments must contain an expression of admiration on the part of the speaker”; the other one is that “they should concern a possession, accomplishment, or personal quality of the addressee” (Alexandre et al., 2018; Sun & Cao, 2024).

Compliment Topics

According to the definition of the compliment, compliment speech seems to be in extensive distribution. However, previous studies have shown that most compliment speech acts are only for a limited number of topics. A lot of researchers pointed that ability achievements took the largest proportion in the distribution of compliment topics in Chinese (Strand, Brotherson, & Tracy, 2018). The distribution is different from English compliment topics. In English compliment topics, appearance is mentioned frequently. The reason why there will be so different is the ideological and cultural differences between the two countries (Feng, 2024; Liu, Chen, & Yang, 2022; Reifsteck, Gill, & Labban, 2016). In Chinese traditional culture, appearance is not considered as of too much social value, but praising the appearance of others is often as a greeting manner. It is usually used by

acquaintances who have not met each other for a long time. Now, with the development of society, people's thinking patterns have changed, and appearance has been considered to be a reflection of a person's character and accomplishment level. In terms of language, the performance is based on the appearance as one of the compliment topic. Possessions is also a common topic of Chinese compliment speech act. Lots of possessions can be talked in our daily communication, such as watches, computers and so on.

Compliment Strategies

Compliment strategies refer to the way by which the behavior of compliment can be realized. Ye classified compliment strategies into four categories (Ye, 1993): explicit compliment, implicit compliment, non-compliment and non-response.

Explicit compliment: Praise others in a clear manner and language. For example: *Your dress is so beautiful.*

Implicit compliment: Praise others in some indirect way, the compliment is reflected in the meaning but not only the form. For example: *I want to get a dress like yours.*

Non-compliment: Although the speaker sometimes gives a compliment speech act, it is difficult to judge whether it is a true compliment or not. For example: *When did you have your haircut?*

No response: Without any response even if you find something is different from before.

Gender Differences in Compliment

The research of gender differences is very common all around the world. Many scholars have been discussed the reasons of the existence of gender differences from different disciplines, so they put forward various views, including the most influential three: male dominance view, cultural differences view and social structure view. Scholars who hold the concept of male domination considered the male domination as the reason for the language and behavior differences between men and women, and in turn, the language and behavior differences would guarantee the male domination in society (Burnett et al., 2016; Wolanin et al., 2016). The view of cultural differences considers the gender differences as a kind of cultural difference, the communication between men and women is a kind of intercultural communication (Bagherian et al., 2019). These two views have their own disadvantages: male dominance view only emphasized the male domination, without the fact that the social status of women will affect women's language use; cultural differences view only emphasized the cultural differences between men and women, but totally ignored the influence of men and women's language use towards their social

status. Crawford first proposed social structure view (Crawford, 1995; Shu & Chen, 2024). It is a new perspective to explain the relationship between language and gender. So many researchers who hold the view of social structure considered that a complete understanding of language differences between men and women must be placed in specific social culture environment (Warner & Dixon, 2015). That is to say, the differences between male and female language behavior can only be understood in specific social culture environment. The female affiliate, the male domination and cultural differences can only be explained in certain social environment. Language cultural differences are actually the reflection of social cultural differences (Lee et al., 2017).

Relevant Theoretical Background

Since this study is intended to find the differences of genders on the actualization of compliment, so it is necessary for us to have a look at some relevant theory foundation. Generally speaking, the theory foundation includes the speech act theory and the politeness theory.

Speech Act Theory

If we want to make a research on compliment speech act, we will talk about some speech act theories, especially Austin's Speech Act Theory and Searle's Speech Act Theory. Speech Act Theory is very influential in modern pragmatics, which was proposed by British scholar Austin (Austin, 1975). Speech Act Theory reexamines and defines the essential characteristics of language from the perspective of philosophy. It regards language as a behavioral phenomenon. The basic principle is that the smallest unit of human communicative information is not a sentence or a sentence group, a paragraph or a chapter. It is to achieve a certain behavior. The words we say can have an effect on the hearer, to some extent, have an intervention to the objective world (Wollenberg, Shriver, & Gates, 2015). The view of Speech Act Theory can be summarized that "to speak is to do things". In other words, language is an act, which is a collection of specific discourses in a certain social context. Austin divided the whole speech act into three levels. They can perform some sorts of specific actions or "doing things" through having specific forces. Austin suggested that there are three kinds of speech acts (Austin, 1975). They are locutionary act, illocutionary act and perlocutionary act. These speech acts are simultaneously performed when one is saying something. Locutionary act is an act of conveying conventional or literal meaning by means of syntax, lexicon and phonology, the act of uttering a sentence with a determinate sense and reference. Illocutionary act is an act which is showing the intended meaning of the speakers

through the sentence's literal meaning. Perlocutionary act is an act of taking effect on the hearer through uttering the sentence, such effects being social to the circumstances of an utterance. That is, the consequences or effects brought about by utterance.

Politeness Theory

Compliment sometimes can be taken as a reflection of politeness. So it has a close relationship with Politeness Principle put forward by Brown and Levinson. Brown and Levinson's Politeness Principle includes all the skills of saving face and face threatening speech acts (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Face threatening speech acts have four categories: the speech acts threaten the hearer's negative face (give the hearer a certain pressure, tell him to do or not to do something); the speech acts threaten the hearer's positive face (give a negative attitude to the hearer); the speech acts threaten the speaker's negative face (to express gratitude, accept thanks or apology, excuse and so on); the speech acts of threatening the speaker's positive face (apologize and accept the compliment). Face-saving techniques include three ways: the positive politeness, negative politeness and non-public.

Methodology

Research Purpose

By studying gender differences in daily compliment of college students, we can understand the language community and to some extent, reflects the existence of forceful language phenomenon in the contemporary college students. Through the research, differences between male and female in verbal communication can be learned and the communication characteristics can be understood. It is also useful to improve the skills of communication and give implications to teachers in the class.

Questions and Hypothesis

The study is to find out whether there are some differences between males and females in using compliment. The specific questions will be mentioned as following:

Q1: Do they take different compliment strategies between different genders?

Q2: Do they take different compliment strategies between different genders in terms of appearance, performance and possession?

Q3: Do they take different compliment strategies between different genders in terms of social status?

The related hypothesis will be given as following:

H1: There are different compliment strategies between different genders.

H2: There are different compliment strategies between different genders in terms of appearance, performance and possession.

H3: There are different compliment strategies between different genders in terms of social status.

Research Subjects

Many college students about 22 to 23 years old from all around the country participated in this study and 40 copies of valid interviews were collected and analyzed. There are 20 female students and 20 male's students among them. They have the similar educational background and share the similar socio-cultural norms.

Research Instruments

Interview is an ordinary method for collecting data in sociolinguistic study. It can show the interpretation of the research through gathering some necessary background information from the respondents. The interview is also an important way for the validity of the data we collect and

analyze. Interview can make sure that the results are close to real life. The content of interview consists of four parts: the first part is to ask the subject to recall the latest situation where he/she show compliments to people who are the same gender as them. "Can you recall the latest time when you show your compliment to the person who is the same gender as you?" "where did you show your compliments to who?" and "what did you say to show your compliments?". The second part is to ask the subject to recall the latest situation where he or she received compliments from the person who are the same gender as you and who did talk to you as well as what did he or she say to express the meanings? The third part is to ask the subject to recall the latest situation where he or she show compliments to the person whose gender is different from the interviewer and repeat the same questions as the first two parts. The last part it to ask the subject to recall the situation where you are complimented by someone whose gender is different from you and describe the specific information. The chart of the interview is shown in Table 1 as follows.

Table 1

Results of Gender strategies

Age	Gender Directions	The Context of Compliments	The Content of Compliment	Compliment Strategies	Social Status
23	Male→Male	In the school, I thought that one of my classmates studied hard and had an excellent grade in class	"You are really brilliant. Show us some ways of study, OK?"	Implicit compliment	classmates
	Male←Male	I showed the class my new calligraphy work	"You do have a literary gift"	Implicit compliment	classmates
	Male→Female	One of my classmates bought a new earphone. I said that this earphone was in fashion.	"Your earphone looks cool."	Explicit compliment	classmates
	Male←Female	I taught a female classmate how to solve one mathematics problem. She praised me	"You are so smart"	Explicit compliment	classmates

Data Collecting and Results

The interviewer collected all of samples and simplified the content and then adjusted the details into numbers so that

data could be lead conveniently into the software.

The header of the chart is divided by five parts: gender; directions of compliment; topics of compliment; strategies of compliment and social class, see (Table 2).

Table 2

Results of compliments

Gender	Directions of Compliment	Topics of Compliment	Strategies of Compliment	Social Class
Male:1	male→male:1	performance:1	explicit compliment:1	equal:1
Female:2	male←male:1	appearance:2	implicit compliment:2	superior→inferior:2
	male→female:2	possession:3	non-compliment:3	inferior→superior:3
	female→male:3		no response:4	
	female→female:4			
	female←female:4			

Through SPSS 16.0 which is a software of data processing, the collected data will be explained as follows:

Analysis and Findings

The results of the research will be presented in this chapter. We will analyze and discuss gender differences in terms of different situations and explain the results in compliments. In order to get the extreme results and take the significance of the difference, SPSS 16.0 software is used to analyze the data. These findings contribute to a deeper understanding of gender dynamics in communication and can inform future research and practical applications in social and professional environments.

The Distribution of Compliment between Different Genders in terms of different topics

The Distribution of Compliment Among Different Topics

Table 3

Results of Performance

	Topic1: Performance	Topic2: Appearance	Topic3: Possession
Number	99	39	23
Percentage	0.61875	0.24375	0.14375

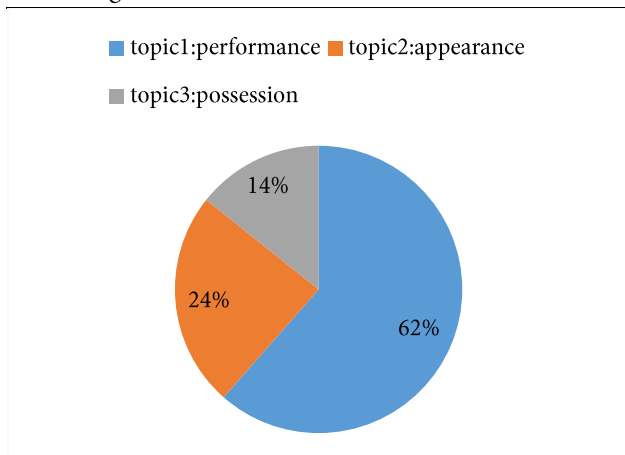


Figure 1: Performance Chart for College Students.

The pie chart demonstrates that college students talk about performance most when they give a compliment, while the topics of appearance and possession are in relatively low frequency in their compliment. In the sample, interviewees often talk about the performance in academic work and in social activities, which shows the characteristics of school life. They sometimes talk about appearance when give a compliment, for example, they may praise a new haircut, a makeup or a good body figure. They talk least about possession when give a compliment, in the sample, possessions including watches and

computers are often being mentioned. The reasons for this phenomenon may be listed as follows: firstly, since the interviewees are college students and many among them are seniors and graduate students with a good education background, therefore, they may concentrate on performance more to get themselves improved; secondly, since college students do not have jobs to make money and they still rely on their parents, hence, they can't afford to buy possessions they want and keep a close eye on others' possession around them, see (Table 3, Figure 1).

The Distribution of Compliment of Different Genders Among Different Topics.

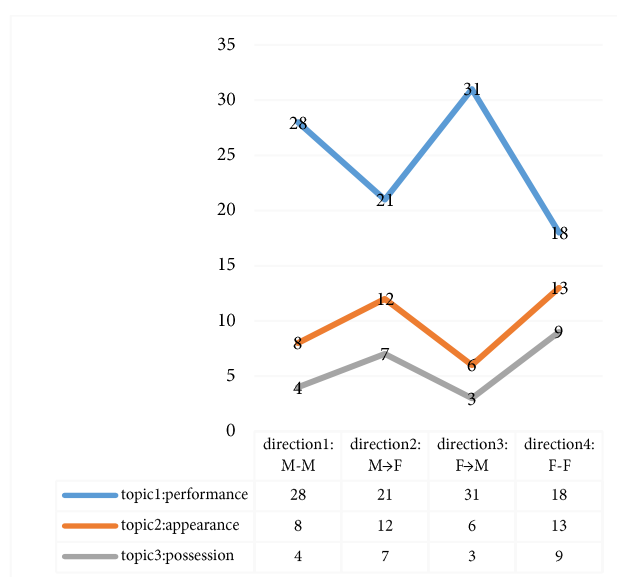


Figure 2: Performance Figure for Different Genders.

1. The Topic of Performance: From the chart above it can also be found that (1) The female compliments most about the performance of male. For example, in our sample, female give a compliment to male about their performance as follows:

“You are really a good basketball player; how long have you been playing it?”

“Your oral English in your presentation is really cool!”

This phenomenon can be explained when we have a look at the different distributions of work for male and female: the male is expected to shoulder the responsibility to earn a living for the whole family by ability and hard work. (2) Little compliment between female and female is about performance: this is because the society does not have much expectation for female in the performance aspect and the role business woman is not accepted by the public.

2. The Topic of Appearance: (1) The chart above also reveals that most of the compliment between females is about appearance. For example, in our sample, female give a compliment to another female about their appearance as follows:

“Your new haircut really suits you!”

“You are so pretty to wear this makeup, and especially the color of the lipstick. This is because in the male-dominant society, the distribution of social chance is uneven and the female can hardly enjoy the same status as male in the job position, so female begins to focus more on appearance as an important tool to compete with others.

(2) From our sample, we also find that females talk little about appearance when they give compliments to males. This may be because females do not care too much about the appearance of male.

3. The Topic of Possession: In our sample, the females get many compliments about their possession both from male and female, while the males got relatively less compliment about possession from male and female. The reason for this may be that female tends to have more delicate thought and observe people carefully (Figure 2). When someone around her has a passion, she can easily find. Examples like:

“The color of your umbrella is really fantastic!”

“The style of your bag is so fashionable!”

However, males are more self-centered and they sometimes only give compliments to others about the possession they are interested in.

“Your computer is so cool to play computer games; I also want one!”

“I like your watch. It must be very expensive, isn't it?”

The Distribution of Compliment between Different Genders in terms of different strategies.

The Distribution of Compliment Among Different Strategies

Table 4

Analysis of Compliments

Strategies	Explicit Compliment	Implicit Compliment	Non-Compliment	No Response
Number	127	20	8	5
Percentage	79.38%	12.50%	5.00%	3.13%

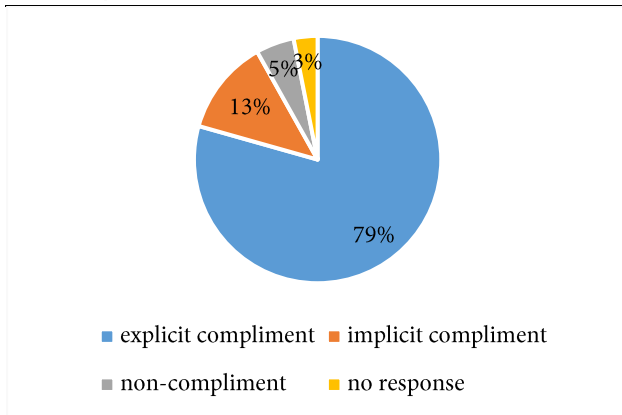


Figure 3: Compliment Strategies for College Students.

In terms of compliment strategies, the majority of college students interviewed adopt the explicit compliment strategy with a proportion of 79%, while the strategy of implicit compliment, non-compliment and no response is in a low proportion. This phenomenon may be due to the following reasons: firstly, from the aspect of individual educational background.

The college students interviewed are well educated, and they are willing to express their respect and attention for others; secondly, from the aspect of the whole society's background, the young generation is deeply affected by the western culture and they become more confident and braver to convey compliments for others; thirdly, from the aspect of politeness, the contemporary Chinese society still keeps the tradition of praising others to show friendliness, and giving compliment to others explicitly is a polite act because this shows care and attention to others, see (Table 4, Figure 3).

The Distribution of Compliment of Different Genders Among Different Strategies.

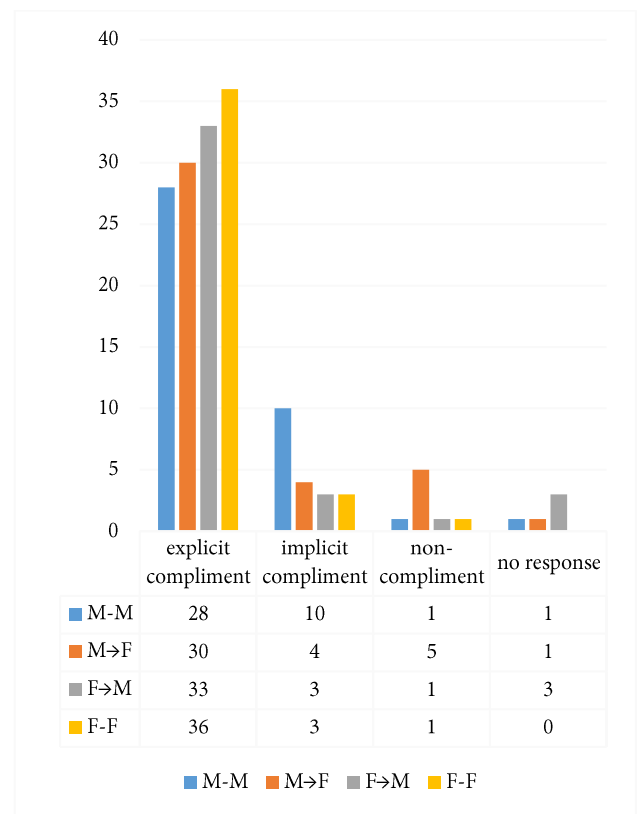


Figure 4: Distribution of Compliments Across Various Strategies by Gender.

1. Explicit Compliment and Implicit Compliment: Explicit compliment: Praise others in a clear manner and language. For example: *Your dress is so beautiful.*

Implicit compliment: Praise others in some indirect way, the compliment is reflected in the meaning but not only the form. For example: *I want to get a dress like yours.* The

chart above shows that the direct compliment appears most frequently between two females, while compliment between two males is rarely in explicit compliment. However, we can easily find explicit compliment between males rather than between two females. The reason is the female is emotional and tends to establish an intimate relationship with the same gender to shorten the social distance while the man pays more attention to the authority and is sensitive to the act of face-threatening.

2. Non-compliment: Although the speaker sometimes gives a compliment speech act, it is difficult to judge whether it is a true compliment or not. For example: *When did you have your haircut?* The male tends to adopt a non-compliment strategy to female. The reason may be that the male is more reason. A male tend to give an objective description of facts and give neutral comment, so they may not give so much compliment to their same gender as female does (Figure 4).

3. No Response: Five examples in our samples are as follows: A female classmate said to a male classmate: “The tie of our teacher is so cool”.

A female classmate said to a male classmate: “This teacher is so learned!”

A female friend said to a male friend: “That boy is so skillful in computer maintenance.

A male friend said to a female friend: “That girl is cute and lovely”.

A male friend said to a male friend: “That boy is so handsome!”

As is shown in the example, female tends to use more no response strategy to compliment the male secretly, this perhaps because that female is expected to be conserved and passive by the society, so when a female admires a male, she may not give a compliment to him directly. A male may adopt a no-response compliment about appearance because they may think it is immature and superficial to compliment appearance directly in front of someone.

The Distribution of Compliment between Different Genders in terms of different social class.

The Distribution of Compliment Among Different Strategies

Table 5

Result of Compliment Distribution among Various Genders based on Diverse Social Classes

Social Class	Equal	Superior→Subordinate	Subordinate→Superior
Number	137	12	11
Percentage	85.63%	7.50%	6.88%

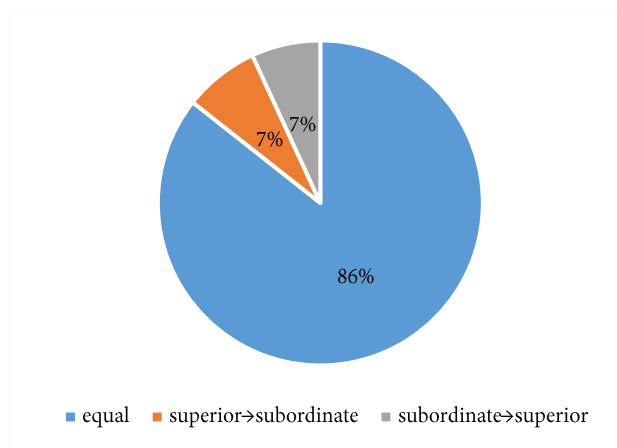


Figure 5: Collections of Compliments from Different Classes.

We can draw conclusion from the chart above that most compliments in our sample take place between people of equal class while statistics have shown that both superior-subordinate compliment and subordinate-superior compliment account for a proportion of 7%. Most compliments are between people of equal class because our interviewees are students and they live and study in campus, so most people they touch in daily life are their classmates, schoolmates or peer friends. They rarely compliment the superior because they are far from home and their older relatives, so they have little chance to get in touch with their superior relatives and compliment them. Even some students may often meet teachers, however, they may not be brave enough to compliment teachers in public, see (Figure 5, Table 5).

The Distribution of Compliment Among Different Social Classes

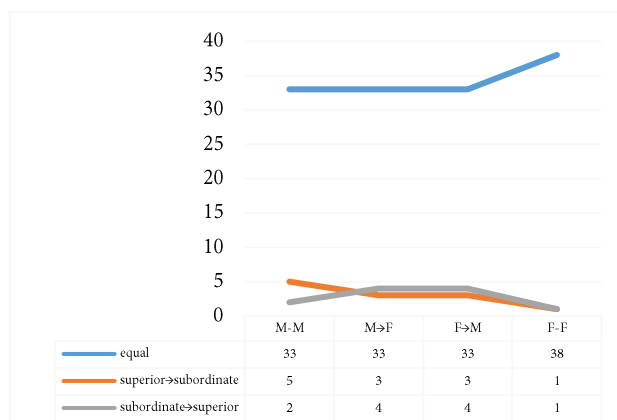


Figure 6: Distribute Compliments Across Different Social Groups.

1. Equal: Most compliments often take place between two females of equal class. In addition, the females tend to give sincere compliment to people of equal class about their appearance and clothes and they rarely give compliments to those who have social distance for them (Figure 6).

2. Superior-subordinate: The superior-subordinate compliment tends to appear between two males. This means that male leaders or elders would like to encourage subordinates or the younger generation to show their expectations. Examples in our samples are such as follows:

“You studied hard!”

“You have done a wonderful job!”

3. Subordinate-superior: On the whole, the total sum of subordinate-superior compliment is small because compliments that happen in this class are usually instrumental and are with a purpose, which may not have a close relation with pure students. The subordinate-

superior compliments tend to appear more between people of different genders rather than the same gender

Analysis of Variance

Overall Difference

If the amount of sample is less than 200, it is generally supposed that the value of sig. is less than 0.05, which indicates that there is a distinctive difference among the variances.

If the value of sig. is 0.05-0.1, there is not distinctive difference. If the value is more than 0.1, which means that there is no difference.

Table 6

Results of ANOVA

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Topics of Compliment	Between Groups	5.769	3	1.923	3.746	.012
	Within Groups	80.075	156	.513		
	Total	85.844	159			
Strategies	Between Groups	2.119	3	.706	1.401	.093
	Within Groups	78.625	156	.504		
	Total	80.744	159			
Social Class	Between Groups	1.075	3	.358	1.172	.322
	Within Groups	47.700	156	.306		
	Total	48.775	159			

From this chart of [Table 6](#), it is easily found that the value of sig. in topics of compliment is 0.012, which means that there is a distinctive difference in topics among different genders. The value of sig. in strategies is 0.093, which means that there is a difference in

strategies while the value of sig. in social class is more than 0.1, which means that there is no distinctive difference among different social classes.

The Difference Among Different Genders in Terms of Topics

Table 7

Analysis of Variations in Topics Across Genders

Dependent Variable	(I) Direction	(J) Direction	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Topics Of Compliment	Interviewer(M)& relationship(M)	Interviewer(M) to parter(F)	-.25000	.16020	.121	-.5664	.0664
		His relationship(F) to the interviewer(M)	.10000	.16020	.533	-.2164	.4164
	Interviewer(M) to parter(F)	relationship(F)& interviewer(F)	-.37500*	.16020	.021	-.6914	-.0586
		interviewer(M)& relationship(M)	.25000	.16020	.121	-.0664	.5664
	His relationship(F) to the interviewer(M)	His relationship(F) to the interviewer(M)	.35000*	.16020	.030	.0336	.6664
		relationship(F)& interviewer(F)	-.12500	.16020	.436	-.4414	.1914
	Relationship(F)& interviewer(F)	interviewer(M)& relationship(M)	-.10000	.16020	.533	-.4164	.2164
		Interviewer(M) to parter(F)	-.35000*	.16020	.030	-.6664	-.0336
	His relationship(F) to the interviewer(M)	relationship(F)& interviewer(F)	-.47500*	.16020	.004	-.7914	-.1586
		interviewer(M)& relationship(M)	.37500*	.16020	.021	.0586	.6914
	Relationship(F)& interviewer(F)	Interviewer(M) to parter(F)	.12500	.16020	.436	-.1914	.4414
		His relationship(F) to the interviewer(M)	.47500*	.16020	.004	.1586	.7914

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

In the terms of topics, there is distinctive difference between M-M and F-F because that the value of sig. is 0.021(p<0.05) (Table 7). There is also distinctive difference between M-

F and F-M because the value of sig is 0.03(p<0.05). What's more, there is extremely distinctive difference between F-M and F-F(p<0.01).

The Difference Among Different Genders in Terms of Strategies

Table 8

The Disparity Among Various Genders Concerning Strategies

Strategies	Interviewer(m)& Relationship(m)	Interviewer(m) to Parter (f)	-.05000	.15875	.753	-.3636	.2636
		His relationship(F) to the interviewer(M)	.02500	.15875	.875	-.2886	.3386
		relationship(F)& interviewer(F)	.25000	.15875	.117	-.0636	.5636
Interviewer(M) to parter(F)		interviewer(M)& relationship(M)	.05000	.15875	.753	-.2636	.3636
		His relationship(F) to the interviewer(M)	.07500	.15875	.637	-.2386	.3886
		relationship(F)& interviewer(F)	.30000	.15875	.061	-.0136	.6136
		interviewer(M)& relationship(M)	-.02500	.15875	.875	-.3386	.2886
His relationship(F) to the interviewer(M)		Interviewer(M) to parter(F)	-.07500	.15875	.637	-.3886	.2386
		relationship(F)& interviewer(F)	.22500	.15875	.158	-.0886	.5386
Relationship(F)& interviewer(F)		interviewer(M)& relationship(M)	-.25000	.15875	.117	-.5636	.0636
		Interviewer(M) to parter(F)	-.30000	.15875	.061	-.6136	.0136
		His relationship(F) to the interviewer(M)	-.22500	.15875	.158	-.5386	.0886

There are some differences between F-F and M-F while other directions have no difference (Table 8).

The Difference Among Different Genders in Terms of Social Classes

Table 9

Result of Differences in Social Class Among Various Genders

Social Class	Interviewer(M)& Relationship(M)	Interviewer(M) to Partner(F)	-.05000	.12365	.686	-.2942	.1942
		His relationship(F) to the interviewer(M)	-.05000	.12365	.686	-.2942	.1942
		relationship(F)& interviewer(F)	.15000	.12365	.227	-.0942	.3942
		interviewer(M)& relationship(M)	.05000	.12365	.686	-.1942	.2942
	Interviewer(M) to partner(F)	His relationship(F) to the interviewer(M)	.00000	.12365	1.000	-.2442	.2442
		relationship(F)& interviewer(F)	.20000	.12365	.108	-.0442	.4442
		interviewer(M)& relationship(M)	.05000	.12365	.686	-.1942	.2942
	His relationship(F) to the interviewer(M)	Interviewer(M) to parter(F)	.00000	.12365	1.000	-.2442	.2442
		relationship(F)& interviewer(F)	.20000	.12365	.108	-.0442	.4442
		interviewer(M)& relationship(M)	-.15000	.12365	.227	-.3942	.0942
	Relationship(F)& interviewer(F)	Interviewer(M) to parter (F)	-.20000	.12365	.108	-.4442	.0442
		His relationship(F) to the interviewer(M)	-.20000	.12365	.108	-.4442	.0442

There is no distinctive difference among different gender in terms of social classes in the area of statistics, see (Table 9).

Conclusion

The investigation into gender dynamics in compliment-giving among Chinese college athletes has provided valuable insights into the subtle yet impactful ways in which communication shapes team environments. The findings from this study substantiate the initial hypotheses, revealing nuanced differences in how male and female athletes use compliments in their interactions, which in turn affects team cohesion and individual performance. These differences are not only reflective of broader societal norms but are also indicative of the specific cultural context of Chinese collegiate sports.

Key Findings

Gender-Specific Communication Strategies: The study confirmed that there are distinct strategies in compliment-giving between genders. Male athletes tended to focus compliments more on performance and skills, aligning with traditional masculine values

of competitiveness and achievement. Female athletes, on the other hand, often emphasized effort and teamwork in their compliments, which can be tied to values of community and support traditionally associated with feminine roles.

Contextual Variations: The context in which compliments were given also varied significantly between genders. Compliments from male athletes were more straightforward and focused on immediate game-related aspects. In contrast, females were more likely to acknowledge personal attributes and contributions beyond straightforward performance, such as perseverance and diligence.

Influence of Perceived Social Status: The data also supported the hypothesis that social status within the team influences compliment strategies. Athletes who held leadership roles, regardless of gender, utilized compliments as a tool to reinforce positive behaviors and motivate teammates. However, the manner in which these compliments were delivered varied, with male leaders more likely to comment on strategic decisions and females more on collaborative efforts.

Implications for Sports Psychology and Team Management: These findings have several implications for sports psychologists, coaches, and team managers. Understanding the gender-specific communication patterns can help in tailoring coaching strategies that enhance team unity and individual athlete satisfaction. For instance, coaches can foster an environment where the strengths of both genders' communication styles are recognized and integrated, promoting a more inclusive team culture. Moreover, this study highlights the importance of considering cultural factors when implementing strategies derived from Western-centric sports psychology in non-Western contexts. The intersection of Chinese cultural norms with modern sports practices presents unique challenges and opportunities for team dynamics and performance.

Future Research

Further research is needed to explore these dynamics in different cultural settings and other sports disciplines to see if the patterns observed here hold universally. Additionally, longitudinal studies could elucidate whether these communication strategies impact long-term team performance or athlete development.

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Conclusion

In conclusion, this research underscores the complexity of communication within sports teams and the profound influence of gender and culture on these interactions. By better understanding these dynamics, stakeholders in collegiate sports can more effectively address the psychological needs of athletes, enhancing both their performance and their experience within the team. This study not only contributes to the academic field of sports science but also offers practical guidance for improving communication strategies in sports teams across diverse cultural contexts.

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