

ソーシャルメディア (Instagram) における 日本とドイツの若い女性の自己表現に関する研究

ベラ パオラ ショウダ

神戸大学 経済経営研究所 計算社会科学研究センター 助教

A comparison on young Japanese and German women's self-presentations on social media

Vera Paola Shoda

Center for Computational Social Science, Kobe University, Japan

Abstract

Social media behavior is affected by cultural factors. In this research, we studied the self-presentation of young Japanese and German female tennis players using content analysis. We analyzed 1680 Instagram photos from 113 Japanese and 55 German tennis players. We found that cultural factors such as collectivism and individualism affect German and Japanese tennis players' self-presentation in social media. Japanese young women are less likely to introduce personal posts, feel more need to show their athletic competence and exhibit more feminine behavior. On the other hand, young German women highlight their uniqueness, pose alone more, and share more relaxed content on their social media accounts. These findings contribute to a better understanding of how women present themselves on social media.

1. Introduction and research questions

Women are represented sexually and stereotyped in traditional media. However, with the emergence of new media, such as social media, women are given the opportunity to choose how they are represented, which resulted in scholarly research on self-presentation in social media. While there are abundant studies in the research field, research is needed to compare the self-presentation tactics of young Japanese and German female tennis players. Likewise, most previous research focuses only on analyzing celebrities but not "ordinary" women. Therefore, in this study, we analyze the self-presentation of professional tennis players (celebrities) and non-professional tennis players (ordinary women). To reveal and reimagine young Japanese and German women's uses of social media such as Instagram, we formulate the following research questions:

RQ1: What are the complexities of everyday self-presentation practices of young Japanese and German women on Instagram?

RQ2: How different are the self-presentations of young Japanese and German women, and what is considered photographable and Instagrammable aesthetic?

2. Theoretical framework

According to the self-presentation theory (Goffman 1959), people act as actors on a stage to present their "ideal" selves to others. Behaviors are classified as either "frontstage" or "backstage." In social media research, frontstage behavior is active or direct activities such as promotion, information on upcoming events or matches, showing winning shots, and fan interaction through comments. On the other hand, backstage behavior is more passive and relaxed such as showing interactions with fellow athletes, friends, and family and posting behind-the-scenes content (Frederick, Pegoraro, and Burch 2017). Furthermore, social media behavior is also influenced by cultural factors such as collectivism and individualism. Japan is considered a collectivist culture, while Germany is an individualistic culture. Previous research showed that in a collectivist culture, people tend to self-efface or be modest as default behavior, less likely to introduce personal preferences and expectations and engage in a higher level of protective self-presentation (Sandal et al. 2014). In contrast, in an individualistic culture, people tend to self-enhance, display their individualistic nature, highlight their self-uniqueness, and have more significant public self-consciousness (Yamagishi et al. 2012). Using the self-presentation theory and cultural factors such as individualism and collectivism, we compare the self-presentation of young Japanese and German women.

3. Materials and Methods

We searched for Japanese and German tennis players' Instagram accounts using a name search for professional tennis players and a keyword search for non-professional tennis players. Accounts of professional tennis players were identified using a name search on Instagram. We used the list of professional tennis players on www.tennisexplorer.com to conduct the name search. After searching, checking, and verifying each account, we collected 63 accounts of Japanese and 40 accounts of German professional tennis players. For non-professional accounts, we used the keywords #テニス女子 (tennis girl) and #Liebe Tennis to search accounts. This process resulted in 50 Japanese and 15 German non-professional tennis players' accounts.

[Table 1. Summary of variables used in coding]

To analyze the self-presentation of young women on Instagram, we used a content analytic method and developed a codebook drawing on Goffman's self-presentation theory (1959) and previous literature (Bodaghi and Oliveira 2022; Emmons and Mocarski 2014; Geurin-Eagleman and Burch 2016; Santarossa et al. 2019). A total of 13 variables were coded for each of the Instagram photos: 1- the date the photo was taken, 2-photo type, 3-prop, 4-focus, and 5-brand visibility. Additional eight variables were coded in photos where the athlete appeared: 6-number of people in the photo, 7-gaze, 8-clothing, 9-proximity, 10-facial expression, 11-motion, 12-touch, and 13-type of shot. The summary of the variables and options is described in Table 1.

Two coders coded 25% of the sample (n=420). Intercoder reliability using Cohen's Kappa (Landis and Koch 1977; Riff 2014) resulted in a range of "moderate" (0.41-0.60) to "almost perfect" (0.81-1.00) on all 13 variables. Afterward, we divided the photos evenly, and each coder coded independently.

4. Results and Discussions

Japanese and German tennis players had a similar average number of followers, following, and posts (see Table 2). The findings reveal several interesting points that we will discuss in this section. The summary of the content analysis findings on variables can also be found in Appendix 1.

Content analysis reveals that female tennis players appear in most of their photos (83.21%). Props (61.67%) and brand or logos (61.43%) were not commonly used or found in the photos. In addition, female tennis players showed feminine behavior, as 71.46% of the photos showed them touching objects or other people.

We found that Japanese women exhibit more frontstage behavior while German women exhibit more backstage behavior. Japanese women are less likely to introduce personal posts and have more posts categorized as sports photos. In contrast, German women are the opposite as they share more personal and relaxed content.

[Table 2. Descriptive statistics]

Japanese women share more posts to show their athletic competence, evidenced by more photos showing their tennis uniform (58.26%) compared to German women (35.92%). German women have more relaxed content and often have passive non-sport motion (57.96%). Regarding cultural factors, we found that individualism and collectivism affected self-presentation. For instance, results show that German women post more photos where they are alone (75.71%), showing their individualism. In contrast, Japanese women have more photos where they are with other people (22.47%), exhibiting their collectivist nature.

5. Conclusions

This research is an essential first step to understanding the self-presentation behavior of young Japanese and German women and the control and opportunities that social media allows them to break away from stereotypical media representations. The results show that although some stereotypical expectations remain, young women have improved their self-presentation tactics online, showing more control and empowerment over how they want to be seen. Cultural factors such as individualism and collectivism also affect how young women present themselves on social media. These findings contribute to the research literature on understanding women's self-presentation on social media.

Declaration of interest

The authors report that there are no competing interests to declare.

Data availability

The data underlying this article will be shared on reasonable request to the corresponding author.

Bibliography

- Bodaghi, Amirhosein, and Jonice Oliveira. 2022. 'A Longitudinal Analysis on Instagram Characteristics of Olympic Champions'. *Social Network Analysis and Mining* 12(1):3. doi: 10.1007/s13278-021-00838-9.
- Emmons, Betsy, and Richard MocarSKI. 2014. 'She Poses, He Performs: A Visual Content Analysis of Male and Female Professional Athlete Facebook Profile Photos'. *Visual Communication Quarterly* 21(3):125–37. doi: 10.1080/15551393.2014.893752.
- Frederick, Evan L., Ann Pegoraro, and Lauren M. Burch. 2017. 'Legends Worthy of Lament: An Analysis of Self-Presentation and User Framing on the Legends Football League's Facebook Page'. *Journal of Sports Media* 12(1):169–90. doi: 10.1353/jsm.2017.0007.
- Geurin-Eagleman, Andrea N., and Lauren M. Burch. 2016. 'Communicating via Photographs: A Gendered Analysis of Olympic Athletes' Visual Self-Presentation on Instagram'. *Sport Management Review* 19(2):133–45. doi: 10.1016/j.smr.2015.03.002.
- Goffman, Erving. 1959. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Landis, J. Richard, and Gary G. Koch. 1977. 'The Measurement of Observer Agreement for Categorical Data'. *Biometrics* 33(1):159. doi: 10.2307/2529310.
- Riff, Daniel. 2014. *Analyzing Media Messages: Using Quantitative Content Analysis in Research*. 3rd ed. Routledge.
- Sandal, Gro M., Fons van de Vijver, Hege H. Bye, David L. Sam, Benjamin Amponsah, Nigar Cakar, Gabriele H. Franke, Rosnah Ismail, Kristine Kjellsen, Ankica Kosic, Anna Leontieva, Shahrnaz Mortazavi, and Catherine Tien-Lun Sun. 2014. 'Intended Self-Presentation Tactics in Job Interviews: A 10-Country Study'. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 45(6):939–58. doi: 10.1177/0022022114532353.
- Santarossa, Sara, Paige Coyne, Craig Greenham, Marcia Milne, and Sarah Woodruff. 2019. 'ESPN's #BodyIssue on Instagram: The Self-Presentation of Women Athletes and Feedback from Their Audience of Women'. *Journal of Student Research* 8(2). doi: 10.47611/jsr.v8i2.818.
- Yamagishi, Toshio, Hirofumi Hashimoto, Karen S. Cook, Toko Kiyonari, Mizuho Shinada, Nobuhiro Mifune, Keigo Inukai, Haruto Takagishi, Yutaka Horita, and Yang Li. 2012. 'Modesty in Self-Presentation: A Comparison between the USA and Japan: Modesty in Self-Presentation'. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology* 15(1):60–68. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-839X.2011.01362.x.

Table 1. Summary of variables used in coding

Category	Analysis options	Cohen's Kappa
Photo type	Personal / Sports / Sponsored, others	0.72
Focus	Athlete/ Family or friend(s)/ Scenery / others	0.52
Prop	Yes / No	0.71
Is the brand or logo visible?	Yes / No	0.63
Is the athlete in the photo?	Yes / No	0.89
Number of people	Solo/ Pair / Group	0.95
Is the athlete looking at the camera?	Yes / No	0.83
Clothing	Uniform / Casual, others	0.84
Proximity	Tight / Medium / Wide	0.73
Type of shot	Headshot/ Half-body / Full-body/ Selfie	0.81
Facial expression	Happy/ Intense/ Others	0.83
Motion	Active sport / Active non-sport/ Passive sport / Passive non-sport	0.76
Touch	Yes/ No	0.74

Table 2. Descriptive statistics

Mean number of	Japan	Germany	All
Followers	28,656	25,727	27,697
Following	456	746	550
Number of posts	344	254	315

Appendix 1. Results of the content analysis

Variable	ALL (n)	ALL (%)	Germany (n)	Germany (%)	Japan (n)	Japan (%)	X2	p value
Photo type								
Sports	754	47.44	192	34.91	562	49.73	49.02	< 0.001
Personal	797	44.88	328	59.64	469	41.5		
Sponsored, Others	129	7.68	30	5.45	99	8.76		
Athlete in photo								
Yes	1398	83.21	490	89.09	908	80.35	20.22	< 0.001
No	282	16.79	60	10.91	222	19.65		
Clothing								
Uniform	705	50.43	176	35.92	529	58.26	77.4	<
Casual	639	45.71	277	56.53	362	39.87		0.001
Others	54	3.86	37	7.55	17	1.87		
Motion								
Passive non-sport	630	45.06	284	57.96	346	38.11	60.82	<
Passive sport	428	30.62	95	19.39	333	36.67		0.001
Active sport	311	22.25	99	20.20	212	23.35		
Active non-sport	29	2.07	12	2.45	17	1.87		
Prop								
No	1036	61.67	379	68.91	657	58.14	18.14	< 0.001
Yes	664	38.33	171	31.09	473	41.86		
Brand visibility								
No	1032	61.43	395	71.82	637	56.37	37.25	< 0.001
Yes	648	38.57	155	28.18	493	43.63		
Number of people								
Solo	948	67.81	371	75.71	577	63.55	22.31	< 0.001
Pair	283	20.24	79	16.12	204	22.47		
Group	167	11.95	40	8.16	127	13.99		
Touch								
Yes	999	71.46	320	65.31	679	74.78	14.00	<
No	399	28.54	170	34.69	229	25.22		0.001
Focus								
Athlete	1124	66.90	401	72.91	723	63.98	13.90	p =
Family / Friends	230	13.69	62	11.27	170	15.04		0.003

Other	179	10.65	60	4.91	152	13.45		
Scenery	147	8.75	27	11.27	85	7.52		
Facial expression								
Happy	951	68.03	315	64.29	636	70.04	5.84	p =
Others	212	15.16	78	15.92	134	14.76		0.054
Intense	235	16.81	97	19.80	138	15.20		
Proximity								
Wide	645	46.14	240	48.98	405	44.60	9.89	p =
Medium	462	33.05	136	27.76	326	35.90		0.007
Tight	291	20.82	114	23.27	177	19.49		
Type of shot								
Full body	899	64.31	323	65.92	576	63.44	13.58	p =
Half-body	338	24.18	96	19.59	242	26.65		0.003
Selfie	117	8.37	49	10.00	68	7.49		
Headshot	44	3.15	22	4.49	22	2.42		
Looking at camera								
Yes	811	58.01	260	53.06	551	60.68	7.59	p =
No	587	41.99	230	46.94	357	39.32		0.006