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Impression management in public and private banks: A comparative study

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Abstract
It is strongly believed that the "first impression is the last impression". Researchers and practitioners all across the world are paying close attention to impression management. Employees in the workplace adopt a variety of impression management techniques in order to improve their performance ratings and thus it has become a necessary factor to be focused on in an organization. It is the process by which individual desires to make a favorable impression on others. The individual intends to be seen in some definite manner. It plays an important role in interpersonal behavior. The purpose of the current study was to find out the difference between impression management techniques in public and private banks. The research was conducted on the Private and Public Bank employees of the Delhi-NCR region. The quantitative data were collected by randomly distributing 150 standardized questionnaires. The tool used for the study was Impression Management Scale developed. The data was analyzed using SPSS. It has been illustrated from the results that employees working in a private bank are more committed to their organization when compared to the employees working in a public bank. Also, it has been concluded that public sector employees scored higher on the usage of impression management techniques showing a significant difference in self-promotion and intimidation impression management techniques in comparison to private sector employees.

Keywords: Commitment, impression management, employee turnover, employee absenteeism

Introductions

Impression management is a strategy for influencing how others perceive a person by examining self- reflective data. Managing the perceptions that people will have of one is stated to be a crucial, intentional, dynamic, and deliberate process that has a significant impact on one's life (Sallot, 2002) [54].
According to researchers, persons who work in organizational settings should comprehend the fundamental concepts or elements of impression management (Crane, & Crane, 2004) [17]. Impression management play a significant part in employee performance evaluation and advancement, but they have received little attention (Singh, Vinnicombe, & Johnson, 2001) [57]. Impression management is a type of action whereby the subordinate creates an impression in the supervisor's mind by demonstrating that they are a very diligent worker. It has been asserted that practicing impression management is a strategy for retaining employment during challenging economic times (Loza, 2009; Turner, 2013) [69, 70]. People who work in organizational settings must comprehend the fundamental concepts or elements of impression management (Crane, & Crane, 2004) [17]. According to Jain (2012) [28], one of the main human motivations, both inside and outside of organizations, is to avoid receiving a bad evaluation. "When you introduce yourself in a style that is both consistent with self and regarded and accepted by others, impression management can return a wide group of optimal results for you, your group, and your association," says Harvard Business School Professor Laura Morgan Roberts. Leary and Kowalski (1990) [34] defined IM as the process by which "individuals attempt to control the impressions others form of them". Wayne and Liden (1995) [63] defined IM as "those behaviours individuals employ to protect their self-images, influence the way they are perceived by significant others or both".
The act of managing one's impression on others involves attempting to alter the influence of others perception about their self- image (Rosenfeld, 1995) [51]. Another definition of impression management is the action people engage in in order to create and keep a favourable impression (Schlenker, 1980) [55]. The ideal strategy to handle impression management at work is to do two things right away: maintain confidence and create credibility.

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The three primary classes of techniques

The way you dress and act both contribute to your *nonverbal impression management*. Body craftsmanship is an example of a nonverbal flag. Given these figures, it shouldn't come as a surprise that 67% of employees claim to cover up their bodily modifications, such as piercings and tattoos, while they are at work (Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology Inc., 2008). *Verbal impression management* takes into account your speaking style, conversational pace, as well as what you say and how you say it. The *conduct impression management* includes both your professional performance and interpersonal interactions. Expanding enjoyment, seeing resemblances, and system centrality have all been shown to be associated with impression management and superior execution evaluations (Barsness, Diekmann, and Seidel, 2005; Wayne and Liden, 1995) [71, 63].

Wortman and Linsenmeier suggested that the findings of sociologists and psychologists on IM should be applied in organizational settings. The IM behaviour is exhibited through different tactics. Jones and Pitman (1982) [29] offered five strategies of impression management: ingratiation, self-promotion, exemplification, intimidation and supplication. Techniques of impression management looked at in the study includes: *Self-promotion*: to be seen as competent; *Ingratiation*: influencing another's perception of our attractiveness, conforming; *Exemplification*: to elicit perceptions of integrity or morality or to arouse guilt; *Intimidation*: arousing fear; *Supplication*: advertising weaknesses, seeking sympathy.

The audience's attribution that is intended will determine which tactic is used. It should also be emphasised that the techniques described don't have to exist or be employed apart from one another (Jones & Pittman, 1982) [29].

Men engage in self-promotion or self-enhancement (the practice of boasting or emphasizing one's best characteristics) more than do women (DuBrin, 1994; Strutton, Pelton, & Lumpkin, 1995) [72, 73]. Men also report doing more favours for others (also called exchange) (DuBrin, 1991; Higgins & Snyder, 1989; Strutton *et al.*, 1995) [74, 75, 73,], and they engage in more acclaiming or entitlement (taking responsibility for positive occurrences) than do women (Lee *et al.*, 1999) [76]. In terms of ingratiation (attempting to induce liking in others), some studies indicate that women use this tactic more than do men (DuBrin, 1994; Smith *et al.*, 1990) [72, 77]. However, two studies indicated no gender difference (Dreher *et al.*, 1989; DuBrin, 1991) [78, 74], and another indicated that men use ingratiation more than women do (Lee *et al.*, 1999) [76].

Problem

The identified problem for the current piece of research work is based on a conceptual grasp of the concepts and an examination of the literature that is available: Impression Management in Public and Private Banks: A Comparative Study.

Objectives

To determine the difference between organizational commitment and impression management techniques used by private and public bank employees.

Methodology

Sample: A sample of 150 employees in the age range 20 to 50 years was collected using a simple random sampling technique. The educational qualification of the participants was categorized into four strata i.e. intermediate, undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduates. The study was conducted in the private and public banks of the Delhi/NCR region from a population that belonged to the three socio-economic statuses i.e. low, middle, and high. The sample comprises 50% male and 50% female.

Research design: The goal of the study was to see if there was a difference between private and public bank workers' organizational commitment and impression management tactics. It was a quantitative study with two tools: a three-part organizational commitment questionnaire and an impression management scale, as well as demographic information. The current study used a between-groups research design.

Tools: Following tool was used to collect the data.

Impression management measure: The impression Management Scale consisting of 22- items, divided into 5 dimensions, was applied to know the impression management techniques used by banking employees. It was validated and developed by Bolino and Turnley (1999) [8]. Responses were recorded on the 7-point Likert scale, 7=strongly agree and 1=strongly disagree. All five subscales produced acceptable internal consistency estimates in all three samples. These include self-promotion (α = .88, .86, and .92), ingratiation (α = .91, .85, and .91), exemplification (α = .81, .79, and .76), intimidation (α = .87, .89, and .84), and supplication (α = .93, .93, and .93). The scale is divided into five subscales outlined by Jones and Pittman (1982) [29], these are: (i) Self-promotion (ii) Ingratiation (iii) Exemplification (iv) Intimidation (v) Supplication.

Results

Table 1: Showing Mean and SD of Private and Public Organizations on Impression Management Techniques

Type of Organization		Self-promotion	Ingratiation	Exemplification	Intimidation	Supplication
Private	Mean	19.40	17.45	15.17	18.90	17.05
	SD	4.86	5.147	4.90	6.162	6.91
Public	Mean	21.09	18.89	15.57	22.57	19.22
	SD	3.99	7.18	5.53	5.74	7.80

Table 1 indicates the mean score of Impression management techniques in the participants (N=150). It is clearly evident from table 1 that in private organizations, participants scored a higher mean score on the self-promotion impression management technique. Similarly, participants working in public organizations scored a higher mean score on intimidation impression management techniques.

Table 2: Showing mean, SD, and t-test for Gender on Impression Management Techniques

Variables	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation	t value
Self-Promotion	Male	21.10	4.14	2.36**
	Female	19.38	4.73	
Ingratiation	Male	19.01	7.44	1.65
	Female	17.33	4.73	
Exemplification	Male	16.02	5.69	1.54
	Female	14.72	4.63	
Intimidation	Male	22.24	6.04	3.03*
	Female	19.24	6.05	
Supplication	Male	19.20	7.76	1.76
	Female	17.08	6.96	

Table no. 2 demonstrates that male participants scored higher on self-promotion and intimidation impression management techniques in comparison to female participants. Further, table also indicates that significant difference was found between both genders.

Table 3: Showing mean, SD, and t-test for Age on Impression Management Techniques

Variables	Age	Mean	Std. Deviation	t ratio
Self –Promotion	20-30	21.01	4.16	2.20**
	31-60	19.39	4.76	
Ingratiation	20-30	18.86	6.83	1.43
	31-60	17.40	5.52	
Exemplification	20-30	16.59	5.17	3.12*
	31-60	14.01	4.94	
Intimidation	20-30	20.92	6.32	0.38
	31-60	20.53	6.13	
Supplication	20-30	19.81	6.85	2.98*
	31-60	16.28	7.64	

**p<.05 *p<.01

Results from Table no. 3 suggest that participants under the 20-30 years age group scored higher on self-promotion, exemplification, and supplication impression management techniques in comparison to participants under the 31-60 years age group. Further, the table also indicates that a significant difference was found between both age groups.

Table 4: Showing mean, SD, and t-test for Type of Organization on Impression Management Techniques

Variables	Type of Organization	Mean	Std. Deviation	t ratio
Self-Promotion	Private	19.40	4.86	2.33**
	Public	21.09	3.99	
Ingratiation	Private	17.45	5.14	1.41
	Public	18.89	7.18	
Exemplification	Private	15.17	4.90	0.468
	Public	15.57	5.53	
Intimidation	Private	18.90	6.16	3.76*
	Public	22.57	5.74	
Supplication	Private	17.05	6.91	1.80
	Public	19.22	7.80	

**p<.05 *p<.01

From the results of Table no. 4 it is concluded that participants working in public organizations scored higher on self-promotion and intimidation impression management techniques in comparison to participants working in private organizations. Further, the table also indicates that a significant difference was found between both private and public organizations.

Discussion

Impression management, the process by which people control the impressions others form of them, plays an important role in interpersonal behaviour.

Table no. 2 shows that male participants scored higher on self-promotion and intimidation impression management techniques. Venkatapathy and Valarrmathi (2014) [61] in their study revealed that males posed a higher mean score on ingratiation compared to female respondents. It has been argued that women are unable to self-promote due to low self-esteem (i.e., a belief that "they have nothing about which to brag"; Kacmar & Carlson, 1999) [79]. Alternatively, women may refrain from self-promotion for largely interpersonal reasons. Women may be reluctant to self-promote for fear of being judged unfeminine, pushy, and domineering, which in turn limits their perceived suitability for many occupations. An important finding is that men use a wider range of tactics (DuBrin, 1991; Karsten, 1994) [74, 80] and report using them more frequently (Bolino & Turnley, 2003a) [9] than do women. Intimidation (using threats and warnings to gain compliance) is one that men use more than do women (DuBrin, 1991; Lee et al., 1999) [74, 76]. Bolino and Turley (2003a) [9] reported that women engage in more passive impression management tactic usage, whereas men report engaging in aggressive impression management tactic usage. We discovered a lot of evidence that men and women utilise techniques differently in ways that are consistent with gender roles when we looked at gender differences in general image management. Men in particular employ more assertive, domineering strategies. It has been also reported that both men and women regularly seek to build impressions, but might do it in diverse ways.

It is evident from Table no. 3 that participants under the 20-30 years age group scored higher on self- promotion, exemplification, and supplication impression management techniques in comparison to participants under the 31-60 years age group. Stevens (1997) [59] established that ingratiation was more likely to be used by interviewees in campus interviews, when they suppose the job to be attractive and when they expect a job offer. Self-promotion is most often used when the chance of employees' claims being challenged or discredited is low (Rosenfeld et al., 1995) [51]. Maximum respondents self- promote themselves to achieve an attribution of confidence. The occurrence of self-promotion increases when individuals have the opportunity to openly impress someone with a higher status about their competence (Giacalone & Rosenfeld, 1986) [24]. In an organizational setting the more difference there is in the power between two people the more likely it is that the lower one will imitate the behaviours and values of the higher one (Rosenfeld et al., 1995) [51]. In most situations, self-promotion is not as successful a tactic for women as it is for men (Giacalone & Riordan, 1990; Wiley & Crittenden, 1992) [24, 81].

Table no. 4 shows that public sector employees scored higher on self-promotion and intimidation impression management techniques than private sector employees. Madan and Srivastava (2016) [37] in their study mentioned that there is no significant difference between private and public sector professionals' inclination towards impression management. Venkatapathy and Valarrmathi (2014) [61] in their study revealed contradictory results that employees from private banks score high on their intimidation techniques compared to public sector banks. Rao et al.

(1995) [82] came up with the theory that "subordinates will employ ingratiation to accomplish desired outcomes the more formal and routinized an organization's work activities are."

Conclusion

Almost everyone use impression management techniques, including managers, job hopefuls, staff members, and even external stakeholders. In contrast to private sector banks, workers of public sector banks engage in self-promotion and intimidation. They are found to use self-promotion and intimidation techniques more frequently than other techniques of impression management. Ingratiation is about appreciating the employees and co-workers for their achievements, forming interpersonal relations with colleagues, and expressing faithfulness and support. Exemplification is concerned with expressions of commendable behaviour of the employee such as being punctual, grasping work opportunities, volunteering, and expressing devotion and interest on the job. It is illustrated from the results that exemplification is mostly used by younger employees as they wish to make space for themselves in the organization. Employees who use Supplication are supposed to be lethargic and demanding and excess use of the tactic is meant to be precarious as it can boomerang and produce negative rather than positive reactions from others. It may be concluded that supervisors need to deal differently with different types of employees and should provide effective training about their jobs so that they can feel confident and try to increase retention and reduce turnover intention.

Compared to female employees, male employees have a propensity to do personal favours for their co-workers. This finding will help managers who are currently in the field comprehend the possible impact of impression management strategies at work. The study's findings offer prospective avenues for additional future investigation. These results specifically demonstrate that people use impression management strategies to cultivate a favourable perception of them. Additionally, female employees need to be taught how to foster a welcoming work environment so that they may make a favourable impression on one another. To have a better understanding of whether impression management behaviours genuinely affect a person's ability to perform their job excellently or in other extracurricular roles, more research is needed.

Limitations

The limitation of the study included limited and small sample size due to restricted time and resource availability to the researcher. To further make a strong generalization, replication of the study on a larger sample is required. Another limitation of the study was that the assessment was done using self-report measures. This, therefore, creates the possibility of biases and errors in the classification of participants and results of the study.

Future Implications

The study has several significant implications for organizations, as the findings demonstrate that the employees that people adopt impression management tactics in order to create a positive image on them. These strategies might make it easier for the worker to function more or less anywhere. Future studies could focus on factors that can help manage employee perceptions, such as empowerment, employee wellbeing, etc.

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