Impression Management and Its Interaction with Emotional Intelligence and Locus of Control: Two-Sample Investigation

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Abstract

The art of self-presentation is inherently important for exploration. Tight markets and fierce competition force employees to think about presenting themselves in the best way that ensures their continuous employment. In this study, an attempt was made to compare between employees of Mexico and Egypt with regard to the types of impression management strategies they use. Interactions between impression management, emotional intelligence and locus of control were also investigated. Several significant insights were reached using the Mann-Whitney U test. Further analyses, implications and future research recommendations are provided.

Key Words: *Self-Presentation; Emotions; Perception; Comparative Study; Middle East; Latin America.*

Introduction

Impression management or the technique of self-presentation was the term first introduced by Goffman in the 1950s. Impression management is the individual's attempt to manipulate how others see him/her as if the individual is an actor on stage trying to convey a certain character to the spectators. Originally a construct in Psychology, scholars of organizational behaviour adopted it in their pursuit to understand the different complicated relationships between employees in organizations (Ashford and Northcraft, 1992; Leary and Kowalski, 1990). Scholars tried to map impression management with other organizational variables, some attempted to explain its antecedents and outcomes, while others tried to measure its strategic impact. Another group of researchers tried to question its reliability making the current literature on impression management lagging behind (El Badawy and Magdy, 2016). In support of the aforementioned scholars, Gardner and Martinko (1988) argued that "there is considerable ambiguity regarding the exact nature of the impression management process and consequently many of the relationships described are tentative and not as well supported as others" (p. 336).

Despite that impression management is not a new topic in the literature, it is yet to be addressed in an adequate manner. Ever since 1988, impression management was characterized as "a relatively new area of inquiry within the field of management" (Gardner and Martinko, 1998, p. 322). Searching different

academic engines yielded very little amount of researches. Additionally, scholars tend to study different organizational topics from the perspective of impression management rather than studying impression management directly (for example, Tata and Prasad (2015) studied CSR from the vocal point of impression management). The aforementioned scholars argued that when organizations detect discrepancy between their actual and desired CSR images, they engage in impression management strategies to reach the desired image. Moreover, studies mostly focus on investigating the individuals' acts of impression management. Adequate investigation of the interaction between impression management and other organizational variables is still rare.

It was concluded that impression management (IM) is a lucrative field for exploring due to four main reasons. First, not enough studies were conducted in an organizational setting. Investigating IM in organizations will help managers and HR practitioners differentiate between qualified candidates and deceivers. Second, based on the first reason, there is no adequate exploration of different contexts e.g. cultures, departments, industries or others. Third, no study, in our search engines, were comparative; toughening the task for superiors to manage diverse, and sometimes international, workforce. Finally, there was an absence in the studies that examine how IM interacts with other behavioral variables inside the organization.

Accordingly, the purpose of our study is threefold. First, we aim to examine IM in an organizational context to learn about the strategies mostly used by employees. Second, we explore the interaction between IM and two behavioral variables, namely, emotional intelligence and locus of control. Third, our study is comparative between two samples, from Egypt and Mexico to realize if there are any statistical differences between Egyptian and Mexican employees. We attempt to respond to Weng and Chang's (2015) call to tackle these constructs in different cultural settings.

This paper is organized into five sections after this introduction. In the following section we review the current literature on impression management, emotional intelligence, locus of control and national culture identifying some key gaps. Then, we describe our research approach. Next we show our key findings. In the fourth section, we discuss those results and in the conclusion section we evaluate our results outlining some managerial implications and suggesting some future research directions.

Theoretical Overview

Nowadays, the proverb "All that glitters is not gold" is not a myth; individuals are concerned about shaping their images and influencing how others perceive them. This makes it difficult to differentiate between individuals who excel in presenting their true-selves to "sell" and those who deceit to earn what they desire. This causes individuals to engage in activities that manipulate their behaviors and project them in a certain desired picture. One of the methods individuals use is impression management strategies. Certainly, such approach can result in positive or negative consequences. As noted by Bolino et al. (2013), individuals must be cautious when using impression management strategies as they may end up with the wrong formed impressions.

Impression management (IM) is defined as the process by which "individuals attempt to control the impressions others form of them" (Leary and Kowalski, 1990, p. 34). Wayne and Liden (1995) defined IM as "those behaviours individuals employ to protect their self-images, influence the way they are perceived by significant others or both" (p. 232).

IM behaviour is exhibited through different tactics. *Intimidation* reflects aggressive behaviour exhibited by the individual to convey the image of being strong, powerful and to be feared. *Exemplification* (known as self-focused) is the act that creates an image of decent hard-working employee who is to be loved and appreciated (Harris et al., 2013). *Ingratiation* (also known as supervisor-focused) are behaviours exhibited by individuals towards their supervisors to create strong relationships, to appeal and to become liked by the

supervisor (Shore et al., 2008). *Supplication* is trying to be perceived as in need of help and always seeking advice (Bolino, 1999). The most accepted classification was that of Wayne and Ferris (1990). They classified the tactics as self-focused, supervisor-focused and job-focused. This is the tested taxonomy in our study.

Employees realize that perceptions differ; it is not about the actual reality, it is about the perceived reality that matters to others. This is the ultimate goal behind using IM; to influence the perceived reality of others and draw certain self-images. Individuals who use IM have the desire to appear more resonant and less discordant (Bilbow and Yeung, 1998; Wu and Shang, 2012). When we discuss IM in our study, we specifically focus on the attributes employees' project upon themselves to become favorable to their superiors and organizations in order to realize positive personal and organizational outcomes. In addition, we refer to strategies that are used steadily on the long-term to create the desired effect. Nevertheless, our study was not longitudinal.

Impression Management and Different Behavioral Constructs

Nagy et al. (2011) referred to four factors that initiate the need to engage in impression management; core self-evaluation, interaction with superiors, managerial support and job stress. Core self-evaluation is the individual's understanding of his/her capabilities or deficiencies. It covers a broad spectrum of characters including emotional intelligence aspects and locus of control. In addition, the more the individual interacts with his/her superiors and perceive the organizational culture to be supportive of self-presentation strategies, the more the individual will engage in impression management behavior.

However, Nagy et al. (2011) argued that when employees perceive their managers to be ignorant of their statuses and reluctant to respond to their work issues, they turn to use hostile impression management strategies to gain the attention of their managers. Along the same lines, the same scholars concluded from their study that when employees become under stress and perceive their work to be out of their control, they turn to supplication strategy to shed the light on their troubles and alleviate their problems (e.g. force managers to redistribute their tasks).

Weng and Chang (2015) examined impression management on the individual and group levels. They discovered that impression management mediated the relationship between personality and LMX relationship (leader-member exchange relationship is basically a social-exchange process. When the relationship is high, members enjoy mutual trust, respect and understanding). Hence, it was impression management that directly affected the relationship between managers and subordinates as subordinates' personal characteristics determined the degree of engagement in impression management to build rapport with the managers. Impression management is used upward when subordinates attempt to influence their superiors' perceptions and downward when supervisors desire to become prone to their subordinates. Even CEOs use impression management with the aim to influence the public opinion or to justify certain organizational decisions made, be they successful or not. Hence, there is a fine line between impression management and deception making scholars skeptical of the underlying ethical assumptions of impression management (Provis, 2010).

Gardner and Martinko (1988) argued that the individual's holistic self-concept determines how they read the situations he/she faces and their reaction to them and to other individuals involved in the situation. They also classified impression management behaviors into verbal, nonverbal and artificial designs. Verbal behaviors cover individuals verbally talking about themselves to convey a certain desired image (self-description, apologizes…). Nonverbal behaviors cover the spectrum of body language attributes that individuals use when interacting with others. Artificial displays are changes individuals introduce to the environment (office furniture or attire) to convey a chosen image.

The type and extent of impression management usage also differ according to the type of the organization, the interviews of Drory and Zaidman (2006) highlighted that employees in mechanistic structures use impression management more aggressively with their superiors while employees in organic structures use impression management less extensively and they use it equally with anyone (superior or colleague).

Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Impression Management

Since EI became a well-established organizational construct, scholars were interested in relating it to different organizational variables (Jafri et al., 2016). This should improve our understanding of EI's role in creating positive changes in the individual, and consequently, in the organizational outcomes.

Successful interpersonal interactions are attributed to EI. Gardner (1993) differentiated between interpersonal and intrapersonal EI. Intrapersonal EI is when the individual is able to reflect on his/her emotions and handle them. Interpersonal EI is the individual's ability to understand his/her emotions, handle them effectively and also understand others' emotions and manage them in the most effective manner to reach desired goals (Cole and Rozell, 2011).

As Jain (2012, p. 11) refers to it, "EI provides the potential for performance, rather than performance itself". Hence, studying EI provides evidence on the capabilities of individuals to act in a certain way or achieve something rather than actual results. Only one study was found which directly tested the impact of EI on IM. Jain's (2012) results suggested significant association, positive and negative, between EI and IM. Using Baron's scheme to measure EI, the dimension of Positive Attitude about Life was negatively related to IM. Jain justified that this dimension is concerned with the general positive perception about oneself and life. Hence, those scoring high on this dimension will tend to not engage in IM behaviour. The results also indicated that different dimensions of EI affect different aspects of IM. For example, Controlled Problem Solving of EI was a positive predictor of self-focused IM. Reality awareness was a positive predictor of job-focused and supervisor-focused IM. In conclusion, EI enhances the individual's interpersonal skills with others. While some dimensions may evoke the individual to engage in IM to create a favourable self-image, other dimensions enhance the individual's self-confidence and stop him/her from engaging in IM tactics.

In one research on emotional intelligence and impression management, Cole and Rozell (2011) argued that emotionally intelligent individuals are able to interpret their emotions and others correctly, and accordingly, they choose the correct impression management approaches to reach their desired goals. In addition, the same scholars believed that the two constructs have not be simultaneously studied in the literature before. The same scholars also suggested that IM tactics of ingratiation, self-promotion and exemplification are mostly used by emotionally intelligent individuals who would refuse to engage in intimidation or supplication because of their possible drawbacks. Nevertheless, the scholars' framework was purely theoretical.

In a comparative study between American and Chinese students, it was found that American students scored higher on EI. In addition, older Chinese students had significantly higher scores on EI as opposed to younger ones. No difference was recorded with respect to gender (Margavio et al., 2012). Hence, we believe that differences between cultures and demographics exist, however, comparative studies are infrequent at the moment.

Locus of Control (LoC) and Impression Management

Gardner and Martinko (1988) hypothesised that (mentioning Caldwell and O'Reilly, 1982; Christie and Geis, 1970; Crowne and Marlovv, 1964; Schlenker, 1980; Snyder, 1979; Weary and Arkin, 1981) personality traits moderate the significance of engagement in IM. Specifically, high levels of self-

monitoring awareness, Machiavellianism, social desirability and social anxiety lead to higher need to manage impressions about oneself.

Locus of control (LoC) is one part of the individual's personality. In our study, the focus was on work locus of control as the studied variable. Work LoC is associated with higher job satisfaction, better organizational performance, less stress, higher perceived control over personal outcomes (Asiedu-Appiah and Addai, 2014), more efficient job performance (Leach-Lopez, 2013) and better decision-making (Spector, 2003). Along the same lines, Muhonen and Torkelson (2004) reported positive associations between external LoC and stress. Asiedu-Appiah and Addai (2014) found that the majority of their sample reported modest levels of internal LoC and it was positively associated with higher organizational effectiveness. The scholars reported that organizational effectiveness is attributed to employees' OCB and dedication to finish their tasks (as a result of their internal LoC). The scholars also argued that education and religion backgrounds affected their sample's level of LoC.

Ng et al. (2014) revealed that LoC mediated the relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behavior among Malaysian nurses. On the other hand, Bellamy, Gore and Sturgis (2005) found positive association between emotional intelligence and internal LoC. The most significant association was between internal LoC and self-awareness.

In one study on employees from India, Jagannathan and Thampi (2013) found a negative correlation between internal LoC and role stress. In another study on an Indian sample as well, Chhabra (2013) found that internal LoC and job satisfaction both were associated positively with commitment. In addition, in conjunction with Asiedu-Appiah and Addai's results (2014), it was concluded that LoC (internality) moderated the job satisfaction-commitment relationship.

In other non-organizational settings, Johnson (1979) explored how the dimensions of LoC affect the IM tactics used by children at schools. He proposed that individuals with internal locus of control will be more likely to engage in IM behaviour. His experiment showed that there is a form of interaction, nevertheless, neither the strength nor the direction of the relationship were identified. Additionally, his experiment provided support to the claim that motives and desired outcomes increase the chance of engaging in IM. Woolston (1970) explored LoC and IM among prisoners. His study also provided support to the claim that individuals with internal locus of control tend to answer surveys in a favourable manner to gain positive outcomes (reduction in prison time). It is worthy to note that both studies were conducted in the field of Psychology.

To our knowledge, no study has explored the interaction between locus of control and IM in organizational settings. Nevertheless, we believe that, in organizations, the opposite happens. Individuals with external LoC will believe that they have no control over work outcomes. Hence, they will engage in IM to positively influence the context and the audience to receive their desired results.

Cultural Comparison between Egypt and Mexico

In order to comprehend the difference between Egyptian and Mexican societies, Hofestede's cultural comparison between Egypt and Mexico was examined (as presented in Figure 1 above). *Power distance* refers to the degree of unequal power distribution and centrality accepted by the society. Both countries scored high on this dimension indicating that high power distance is visible in the organization. *Individualism* is the degree of interdependence between members in social settings. Both countries scored low on this dimension reflecting the collectivism present in the society, and the workplace as well. *Masculinity* refers to the degree the society nurtures the desire to win and outstand others versus caring for other needs and harmony among all members. Egypt is relatively a feminine society while Mexico is relatively masculine.
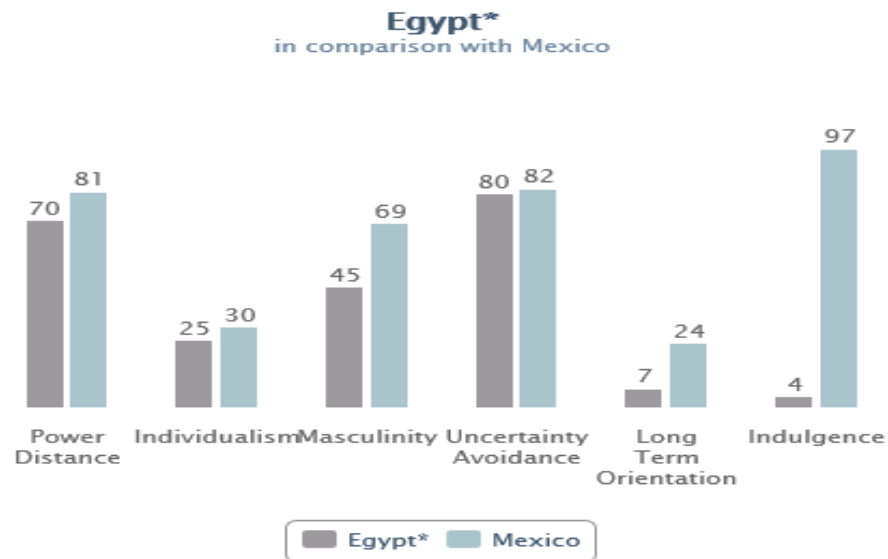
Figure 1. Egypt vs. Mexico (Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov, 2010)

Uncertainty avoidance is the degree of accepting unclear situations. Both countries scored very high on this dimension indicating that individuals dislike ambiguity and unclear decisions. They tend to have short-term orientation and depend on their past decisions in making new future ones (to gain the same results) as indicated by the following dimension; *Long-term orientation* identifies the degree of the society's clinginess to the past and using past behaviour to determine present and future actions. Finally, the dimension of *indulgence* vs. restraint is defined as the degree to which members of the society control their cravings. Low scores indicate cynicism and pessimism (reflected in Egypt). Individuals are restrained by the norms and values of the culture and perceive any different actions as prohibited. Mexico is certainly an indulgent society (Hofstede et al., 2010).

Based on the literature and Hofstede's cultural analysis, the following research questions were developed:

1. Is there a difference between the IM strategies used by employees of Egypt and Mexico?
2. What is the relationship between IM and EI in both samples?
3. What is the relationship between IM and LoC in both samples?

Methodology

Sample

This study had two samples. The first sample was extracted from MBA classes at a private university in Cairo, Egypt. One-hundred and sixty questionnaires were distributed. Only one-hundred and six were returned complete with response rate of 66.3%.

The Egyptian sample constituted of 66% males and 34% females. The ages ranged from less than 25-30 years old (46%), 30-40 years old (39%), 40-50 years old (14%) and above 50 years old (only 1%). 71% of the sample held a Bachelor degree while the rest earned a post-graduate degree.

All participants were full-time employees with years of experience ranging from less than five years (41.5%), 5-10 years (35%) and over 10 years of experience (23.5%). Only 21% of the participants worked

in manufacturing organizations. 7.5% were from the top management, 31.1% were middle-level managers, 24.5% were first-line managers, and 36.8% held non-managerial positions.

The second sample was extracted from MBA classes at a Mexican university. Two-hundred and five questionnaires were distributed. Only one-hundred and twenty-six questionnaires were returned complete with a response rate of 61.5%. The one-hundred and twenty-six participants constituted of 54% males and 34% females with 54% (25-30 years old), 40.5% (30-40 years old) and the remaining of the sample is above 40 years old. 78.6% of the sample had a Bachelor degree while the rest earned their Master's degrees.

35.7% of participants worked in manufacturing organizations, 49.2% worked in services and the remaining worked in other types of institutions. 84% were full-time employees. 12% of the sample were from the top management, 31.7% were middle managers, 28.6% were first-line managers and 27.8% were non-managerial employees. 65% had less than five years of working experience, 26% had 5-10 years of experience and the remaining of the participants had more than ten years of experience.

Procedure

Participants were approached at the start of their classes and asked to complete the questionnaire. The questionnaires were collected at the end of the class. Participation in the study was voluntary and anonymity was assured.

Instrument

Impression Management

The instrument used to collect data on impression management was adopted from Wayne and Farris (1990). The instrument constituted of 24 items scored on a five-point Likert scale. The items measured impression management in terms of three sub-dimensions; self-focused, job-focused and supervisor-focused. Wayne and Farris reported their Cronbach's reliability coefficients to be above 0.80. The Cronbach alphas were 0.83 for the Egyptian sample and 0.86 for the Mexican sample.

Emotional Intelligence

The tool developed by Schutte et al. (1998) was adopted in this study. 31 items were scored on five-point Likert scale. Items measured emotional intelligence based on 6 sub-dimensions; appraisal of others' emotions, appraisal of one emotions, regulations of emotions, social skills, utilization of emotions, and optimism. Schutte et al. (1998) reported Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.90 as opposed to 0.81 and 0.89 for the Egyptian and Mexican samples, respectively. All sub-dimensions of emotional intelligence correlated significantly positive which supports the notion that the sub-dimensions of emotional intelligence are inter-linked.

Locus of Control

The instrument developed by Spector (1988) was adopted. Blau (1993) argued that Spector's tool measuring work LoC was a better predictor of certain types of performance than Rotter's. Those types were initiative (similar to OCB) and compliant (sticking to basic job descriptions). Initially, the instrument constituted of 16 items. However, two items were removed as they were redeemed redundant and inappropriate for the selected samples. The Cronbach Alpha coefficient was 0.70 for the 14 items (in both samples). Higher scores on the instrument indicated *externality*.

Results

Table (1) displays the means and standard deviation of all dimensions as reported by participants. The average scores prove that both Egyptian and Mexican employees mostly use self-focused IM tactics. Both samples also reported the same average level of EI and slightly different levels of LoC. However, the average LoC scores prove that both samples have relatively external LoC, with Egyptians exhibiting a higher level.

Table 1. Descriptives of the Samples

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Job-focused impression management	Egypt	106	2.85	0.48
	Mexico	126	2.84	0.69
Self-focused impression management	Egypt	106	3.66	0.52
	Mexico	126	3.72	0.77
Supervisor-focused impression management	Egypt	106	3.15	0.57
	Mexico	126	2.89	0.75
Impression Management	Egypt	106	3.11	0.43
	Mexico	126	3.04	0.59
Appraisal of others' emotions	Egypt	106	3.52	0.52
	Mexico	126	3.20	0.61
Appraisal of own emotions	Egypt	106	3.79	0.51
	Mexico	126	3.99	0.74
Regulation of emotions	Egypt	106	3.81	0.49
	Mexico	126	4.14	0.66
Social skills	Egypt	106	3.82	0.48
	Mexico	126	3.84	0.69
Utilization of emotions	Egypt	106	3.72	0.40
	Mexico	126	3.83	0.72
Optimism	Egypt	106	3.98	0.45
	Mexico	126	3.51	0.63
Emotional Intelligence	Egypt	106	3.76	0.33
	Mexico	126	3.74	0.53
Locus of Control	Egypt	106	2.52	0.42
	Mexico	126	2.17	0.47

To test the null hypothesis that two samples come from the same population against an alternative hypothesis, that a particular population tends to have larger values than the other, the Mann-Whitney U test was used. As shown in Table (2), there were no significant differences between both samples with respect to the overall IM and EI (Sig. 2-tailed > 0.5). Nevertheless, there was statistically significant difference in the reported LoC average scores ($p < 0.001$).

However, looking closely at the sub-dimensions of the three variables, we found that there are significant differences in average scores of supervisor-focused IM, appraisal of own and others' emotions, regulation and utilization of emotions and optimism from EI. Egyptian participants reported higher mean scores on supervisor-focused IM, appraisal of others' emotions and optimism EI. Mexican participants reported the higher mean scores on appraisal of own emotions, regulation and utilization of emotions (shown in Table 1).

Table 2. Comparisons of Means (Mann-Whitney U Test)

	Group	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney U	Z	P-value	
Job-focused impression management	Egypt	106	116.78	12378.50	6648.50	-0.06	0.9538	P > 0.05 Non-Significant
	Mexico	126	116.27	14649.50				
Self-focused impression management	Egypt	106	108.96	11550.00	5879.00	-1.58	0.1148	P > 0.05 Non-Significant
	Mexico	126	122.84	15478.00				
Supervisor-focused impression management	Egypt	106	131.00	13886.00	5141.00	-3.02	0.0025	P < 0.01 Highly Significant
	Mexico	126	104.30	13142.00				
Impression Management	Egypt	106	121.79	12909.50	6117.50	-1.10	0.2708	P > 0.05 Non-Significant
	Mexico	126	112.05	14118.50				
Appraisal of others' emotions	Egypt	106	137.46	14571.00	4456.00	-4.37	0.0000	P < 0.001 Highly Significant
	Mexico	126	98.87	12457.00				
Appraisal of own emotions	Egypt	106	103.03	10921.00	5250.00	-2.82	0.0048	P < 0.01 Highly Significant
	Mexico	126	127.83	16107.00				
Regulation of emotions	Egypt	106	93.17	9876.50	4205.50	-4.88	0.0000	P < 0.001 Highly Significant
	Mexico	126	136.12	17151.50				
Social skills	Egypt	106	111.97	11869.00	6198.00	-0.95	0.3427	P > 0.05 Non-Significant
	Mexico	126	120.31	15159.00				
Utilization of emotions	Egypt	106	104.90	11119.00	5448.00	-2.42	0.0154	P < 0.05 Significant
	Mexico	126	126.26	15909.00				
Optimism	Egypt	106	145.25	15397.00	3630.00	-6.07	0.0000	P < 0.001 Highly Significant
	Mexico	126	92.31	11631.00				
Emotional Intelligence	Egypt	106	112.63	11939.00	6268.00	-0.81	0.4205	P > 0.05 Non-Significant
	Mexico	126	119.75	15089.00				
Locus of Control	Egypt	106	143.39	15199.00	3828.00	-5.60	0.0000	P < 0.001 Highly Significant
	Mexico	126	93.88	11829.00				

The correlation analyses between our three variables were conducted afterwards. With respect to the Mexican sample, there was significant positive correlation (r= 0.36, p< 0.0001) between IM and EI and almost significant negative association between EI and LoC (r= - 0.18, p= 0.05). With respect to the Egyptian sample, there was only significant positive correlation between IM and LoC (r= 0.25, p< 0.05). Controlling for EI, the correlation coefficients did not change excluding any possibility for moderation effect.

Discussion

Without a doubt, impression management is one of the hot topics that deserves further examination and analysis. The challenge in this study lied in drawing relations, extracting data on IM from participants and

expanding the scope of the analysis to make an international comparison. In a previous paper on IM, El Badawy and Magdy, 2016 aimed to pool most of the literature written on IM to get a glimpse of what has been written and pave the road for future researchers.

In this study, our main three objectives were to investigate the types of IM strategies employees use, examine the interaction between IM and two organizational variables, emotional intelligence and locus of control, and compare between two samples, from Egypt and Mexico.

Our results confirm that employees use different types of IM techniques to influence the perception of others and create a certain desired image for themselves. The average scores of participants in both samples indicated that both nationalities mostly use self-focused IM techniques. However, only supervisor-focused IM techniques were statistically expressively used by Egyptians. These results provide answers to our first research question. The two suggested reasons behind this result is the cultural orientation of the society which is high on power distance. Hence, employees focus on appealing to their supervisors and ensuring their satisfaction. Second, Egyptian organizations suffer from double standards in evaluations and distribution of resources (nepotism), therefore, employees try to please their supervisors and gain their acceptance in every way to remain in the organizational loop. Nevertheless, the results disagree with the societal orientation of being collectivist and feminine. Apparently, employees compete for job positions and resources.

With respect to emotional intelligence, five out of the six measured sub-dimensions had significant differences between both samples. Mexican employees are clearly more consciously oriented of their emotional intelligence and how to channel it as they were able to appraise, regulate and utilize emotions. Results of the Egyptian participants were mixed and confusing. Finally, the analysis confirmed that Egyptians have relatively higher external locus of control which is congruent with the society's Restraint orientation. Egyptians, hence, believe their lives are controlled by norms and rules of the society. They consider their lives to be out of their control and managed by other external factors.

Correlation analysis followed the logic presented in previous literature. Positive association between impression management and emotional intelligence in the Mexican sample proves that individuals who have the intelligence and understand how to effectively channel it are better able to use impression management techniques and strategies to reach their desired goals (answering our second research question).

When it comes to locus of control, results were rather confusing, but interesting. Egyptians, who have external LoC, used IM strategies significantly indicating that because they cannot control their destiny, they use IM techniques to influence their surroundings. Nevertheless, Mexican participants reported the opposite; those who have internal LoC used IM techniques broadly. This indicates that they believe they have control over their environments and outcomes; hence, they deliberately use IM techniques as a way to realize positive outcomes (answering our third research question). We argue that both types of personalities use IM techniques, however, with different underlying assumptions.

Conclusion, Limitations and Future Research Recommendations

The main contribution of this study is to present novel results about the interaction between impression management and other organizational variables, such as EI and LoC using two sample investigation. Our study indicates that cultural settings has an impact on EI, LoC and IM strategies. Certainly our study was not comprehensive nor could results be easily generalized, but it provides interesting insights for managers. Our study suggest that employees from Egypt and Mexico use extensively IM strategies, this finding must be taking in account for managers in terms of organizational performance' results. It was found in the literature that employees high on IM could perform more effectively that those low on IM in boundary spanning roles due to the facility to adapt. However, the literature also indicates that employees low on IM

could perform better when they work in organizations which better fit with their beliefs and values (Snyder and Copeland, 1989). The results of the present study also show that managers should pay attention to the cultural context to devise how employees could use IM strategies.

There were some limitations in conducting this study. First, the sample size is small relative to the population size. Second, some of the results were insignificant or confusing. One way to justify the results provided for is that IM is heightened during certain contexts like in an interview setting, for example. The current study failed to grasp a certain setting where using IM is amplified. Third, differentiating between IM tactics and natural responses is indefinite; it is complicated to attribute a gesture to IM tactic or individual's personality. Forth, self-reported measures have the risk of participants having social desirability bias. Therefore, they may not answer the questions truly and only provide answers that they think will be appealing to researchers. Fifth, we did not explore the motives for engaging in IM (could be cultural on the organizational level, on the group level to signal group cohesiveness or to join a certain desirable group, or an individual need for promotion, approval, resources…). Sixth, we focused on subordinates; not reference to superiors' perceptions. Finally, we studied associations rather than the causality of one variable on another.

For future studies, it is recommended to conduct experiments in actual settings where using impression management tactics is most likely, for example, during the selection process of job candidates. Larger sample sizes are recommended with a focus on diversity in demographics, cultures and types of organizations. Samples should be collected from different industries as well to allow for comparisons (Jain, 2012). Finally, it is recommended to study impression management in relation to different organizational constructs.

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