Impression Management and its Impact on Employee Promotion

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Abstract

Impression management is a political type of behaviour to convince the audience to see the actor in some definite way. The research was conducted in the Public Sector Universities of Peshawar. 200 questionnaires were randomly distributed among the male employees of these organizations. The response rate was 183 which is 91.5% of the sample. The hypothesis of the research indicate that impression management has impacted over employee promotion or impression management hasn't impacted over employee promotion. The findings of the research reveal that impression management has an impact over employee promotion in the organization.

Keywords: Impression Management, Employee Promotion

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Little attention has been given to the role of impression management and political tactics, which plays an important role in the promotion, and performance rating of employees (Singh, Vinnicombe, & Johnson, 2001). Impression management is a kind of behavior through which the subordinate make some place in the mind of the supervisor by showing that they are very hard working employee. The subordinate impression management has a very high influence on supervisors' performance rating (Wayne & Liden, 1995).

Employees use impression management to get status. The main force behind getting secondary and primary reward is

impression management. Impression management is one of the most important tactics that now a day's employee in the organization use for their promotion or to get some long term future benefits (Schlenkar, 1980).

The study was conducted in the public sector Universities of Peshawar with the intention of finding out whether the employees of these organization use the impression management tactics for their promotion or not and if impression management tactics help them in their promotion.

Background of the Study

Education plays a very important role in the development of any nation and society. If we want to see the development of a country, we will see that educational institutions of that country not only serve the society by educating people but also employ people in these institutions. Employees in such organizations are either promoted based on education or tenure, but those who fail to do so go for impression management. Employees use impression management behavior to increase their power over other employees (Jones & Pitman, 1982).

When the relation between the supervisor and the subordinate is developing stronger, this is the time when the supervisor starts categorizing subordinates as hard working and chooses the best employee to promote in the organizational hierarchy. This is the best time for subordinate to start using impression management tactics strategically over time to have salient outcome such as high performance ratings, increase in compensation, and to get promotion" (Ligen & Feldman, 1983). Employee use impression management strategy to increase the visibility and commitment for their organization. (Schlenker, 1980)

Employees, who have low impression management and do not manage their impression in the organization promotion arena, would not be successful in achieving promotion. Employees

having high impression management may send their right kind signals to make the desired identity for further promotion (Kipnis & Vanderveer, 1991). Roberts (2005) noted that people who are depending upon other people position are probably too busy in impression management.

Achieving status and power do not describe the reason why employees use impression management in front of people? This is because that status is an end and means as well toward other goals so status by itself is sufficient satisfaction. (Garland and Beard. (1979). Impression management can also be used as protection against the negative comments and to improve a favourable impression (Baron, 1986).

Scope of the Study

The scope of the study is limited to Peshawar. The study is conducted in the public sector Universities of Peshawar.

Literature Review

Impression management is a behavior through which individual want to influence others perception about their self-image (Rosanfeld, 1995). Impression management can also be defined as a behaviour through which people want to make and maintain some desirable impression (Schlenker, 1980). Study shows that many researchers have studied impression management behavior and paid little attention to the impression management behavior and worked on their theoretical and empirical study but their study was limited to the field of social psychology and very few researchers have studied its effect in organizational perspective (Jones, Gergen, & Jones, 1963; Schlenker, 1980).

At the most common level, the impetus to engage in impression management behavior arrives from the same motivational origins as all behavior that is to increase the expected rewards and decrease the expected punishment (Leary & Kewalski,

1990). As competition is increasing at work place and in an unstable economy, the employees must find some other ways to increase their perceived benefits to the organization and gain some future short term and long term benefits. (Kacmar & Baron, 1999)

It is important for human resource manager to understand the impression management behavior as it is a useful tool because it is the duty of human resource manager to know the employee future abilities, skills and potential which are not clearly defined because they are dependent upon the employee and employee use impression management and showing themselves competent. (Rosan feld, 1995).

The employee success and promotion chances within the organization are influenced by the impression management behavior of employee. Organization and individual success both depend upon the skills that how impression is managed? And by managing these skills, employees achieve their own individual and organizational goals (Gardner, 1992).

Impression management behavior can be used by every individual or groups in the organization to achieve their long term and short term goal and achieve promotion in the organization hierarchy. With impression management strategies, the subordinate wants to impress the supervisor and conveys the message to the management that he or she is hard working, friendly and model employee. (Tedeschi & Beard, 1979)

Impression management and self-presentation

Many people consider impression management and self-presentation as same but it is totally different from each other. Many researchers have different opinions about the words impression management and self-presentation; however most researchers in their literature use these words as synonyms (Schlenker, 1980). Self-presentation can be seen as very close to the impression management but it is still not similar to impression

management. Impression can also be managed by some other way than self-presentation (Greenwald & Breckler, 1985).

Researchers have identified that self-presentation not only effects impression that others make but also has some effect on the impression of the employee about his own self (Greenwald & Breckler, 1985). Impression management can be viewed as wide and more encompassing terminology than the self-presentation (Leary & Kewalski, 1990). Employee often uses impression management behavior without having view of their own behavior. (Schlenker, 1980).

There are two types of impression management behavior used by individual employee i.e. non-verbal impression management and verbal impression management behavior.

Non-verbal impression management behavior consists of expression like frowns, smiles and yarns that show mood of the people. Non-verbal can describe many kind of information like physical status such as, weakness and cognitive status such as power of understanding. (De Paulo, 1992). Non-verbal impression management behavior is uses to make impression about sincerity, excitement and unpretentious, and show an emotional condition like happiness (Schlenker, 1980).

Verbal impression management behavior can be further divided into two main categories i.e. assertive tactics & defensive tactics (Baron, 1986; Tedeschi & Melburg, 1984). Employees use assertive tactics to make them appear competent (Jones & pitman, 1985) and employee uses a defensive tactics to decrease the deficiencies, to keep a particular image and prevent himself/herself from looking bad (Baron, 1986).

Employee should be care full in using different tactics of impression management because it contains the risk that it may be negative (Jones and Pitman, 1985). Impression management has caught the attention of researchers and practionners. Different

impression management tactics are used by employee in the organization to get good performance rating and promotion in the organizational hierarchy. (Goffman, 1959)

Employees believe that for promotion in the organizational hierarchy, they have to show high performance and make the impression that he or she is hard working employee, and construct strong relationship with the supervisor. But some employees believe that doing good work is enough for getting promotions in the organizational hierarchy, and the political influence doesn't help employee in their promotion. It has been found that male employee use more impression management for their promotion as compared to female (Stumpf & London, 1981).

Impression management helps in achieving organization goals, it should not be considered as dysfunctional within an organization. (Rosan feld 1995). Research shows that young and junior managers always say that impression management is a useful tool for their promotion (Ansari & Kapoor, 1987). Impression management has positive role in the promotion of employee in the organization. Subordinate at the job may start engaging themselves with the most suitable impression management tactics if they want to move upward in the corporate structure. (Garland & Beard 1979)

Those employees who want to promote themselves may attempt to convey the message of being the best in the organization by having multiple skills like communication skills, good decision making, hardworking, and competition skills. Employees having high impression management skills may be willing and able to make an image to match the place into which he or she wants to work harder (Garland & Beard, 1979; Tedeschi & Melburg.1984). It shows that impression management has an impact over an employee promotion and employee may use impression management for his or her promotion. Promotion is a motivational tool used by the organization to motivate employee for their work. (Kacmar & Baron, 1999)

Promotion is a form of appreciation for employees who make important and effective contribution to the organization. Promotion gives employee enhanced management role in the organization. A promotion is powerful communication tool about what is being valued in the organization. Therefore promotions must be available to that employee who plays some role in the contribution of work value to the organization (Green Wald & check, 1985).

Research shows that promotion chances to employee represents job satisfaction of employee. Promotion in organization is one of the most important issue of employee in the organization. Many employees are dedicated to the organization in hope of getting promotion (Ligen & Feldman, 1983).

Employees in the organization should be promoted on the basis of their contribution towards the goal and the success of an organization. The Promotion process in the organization should be free from any kind of nepotism and favouritism towards any particular employee of the organization; if the promotion process is not fair it may brings conflicts and dissatisfaction among the employees. (Roberts, 2005)

It is important for the management to identify the hard working and talented employees so that they will get promotion on timely basis. Any delay in the promotion of a potential employee can make him or her look up for better opportunities in other organization. Every organization draft standards for their employee over which individual employee performance is evaluated and this evaluation of employee is used for the promotion of employee in the organization (Hilton & Darley, 1985).

Promotion of employee reduces the employee resistance in the organization. Employee finds it difficult to work with a person who is hired from other organization. Employees who are promoted internally may find very less resistance as compared to

employee who are hired from outside the organization (Hilton & Darley, 1985).

Promotion of employee helps to strengthen the organizational image. Employee promotion can give a sense of association toward the organization. Satisfied and loyal employee will always evaluate his/her organization and may recommend his/her organization to other talented employer in the market to join the organization (Gardner & Martinko, 1988). Promotions increase the motivational level of employee; it will thus subsequently lead to employee satisfaction. An employee who is satisfied from his job will always make contribution for the achievement of his/her individual and organizational goal (Tedeschi & Melburg, 1984)

Conceptual Frame Work
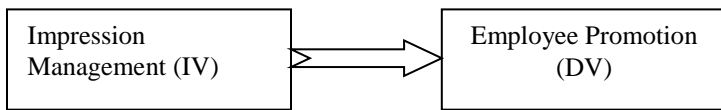
Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Research Hypothesis

H_1: Impression management has an impact upon employees' promotion.
H_0: Impression management has no impact upon employee promotion.

Research Methodology

This research is a correlation research (casual) because the study is conducted to find the relation between the dependent variable (promotion) and independent variable (impression management). The population of the research is the administrative staff of the three Public Sector Universities, Peshawar University, University of Engineering and Technology and Agricultural

University, Peshawar. For the sample, 200 male employees were randomly selected from the three organizations. 200 questionnaires were distributed randomly among the male administrative staff of Peshawar University, Agricultural University, and University of Engineering and Technology Peshawar. The response rate is 183 which is 91.5% of the total sample selected. Among the 200, 80 were from University of Engineering and Technology Peshawar, 55 were from the Peshawar University and 65 from Agricultural University. Primary data is collected through questionnaire. A closed ended questionnaire on 5 lacerate scales was used for the data collection.

Data Analysis

The research study assesses impression management and its impact on employee promotion. The employees of the public sector universities of the Peshawar university campus were taken as population. Tables below show the output which is discussed further.

Impression Management vs. Employee Promotion

Table 1. Impression management and employee promotion

Hypothesis	Standardized Beta Coefficient	Adjusted R^2	F	p-value	Hypothesis Supported
H1	.158	.020	4.63	.033*	Yes

Note. *p < 0.05,

The analysis of the results shows that Impression management has significantly impacted over employee promotion in organization. Regression analysis was done between independent variable, Impression management and dependent variable employee promotion.

The statistics reveal that the model is significant at p = 0.000 with $R^2 = 0.025$, that indicates that 2.5% employee promotion in organization is due to impression management, The coefficient

value was b= .274, indicating that with 1 unit change in independent variable brings equal amount of change in employee promotion. Hence we reject the null hypothesis.

Conclusion

The objective of the study was to find the relation between the two variables i.e. impression management and its impact on employee promotion. To see that impression management has an impact on employee promotion or it has no impact over employee promotion. The result supports the first hypothesis and the null hypothesis was not supported by the result. The result of the study shows that hard work, work experience and expertise are not the only factors of promotion of employee within the organization.

The result of this study shows that impression management play some role in the promotion of employee. Employee who uses impression management to impress the supervisor will get some positive performance ratings and will get some promotion and reward in the future.

The result of the research revealed that for getting promotion in the organization, the employee should not only rely upon their work experience, education, and hardworking but the employee should also manage their impression management and make stronger relations with their supervisor which is also one of the important factor which helps employee in their promotion.

The study showed that employees who cannot use the impression management and just focus on their work will not achieve such a high performance rating as compared to the employees who are hardworking and also use the impression management tactics to show themselves dedicated and loyal to the organization. The model of the research is significant which means that employee who uses the impression management tactics will get some promotion and future benefits.

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