

Impression Management Tactics in the Workplace: Enhancing or Compromising the Employee Performance?

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Abstract

Employees use impression tactics to create a specific self-image in the workplace, consciously or unconsciously. Such tactics have been classified into positive and negative tactics, with the former including self-promotion, ingratiation, and exemplification, and the latter including intimidation and supplication. Positive tactics generally lead to favorable outcomes, for instance, high-performance ratings, while negative tactics lead to the opposite. However, categorizing impression management tactics into positive and negative may not be entirely accurate, and our research findings challenge this traditional classification. An online self-report measure survey was implemented, involving 313 employees working in government and private organizations in Bengkulu, Indonesia. Hypothesis testing using Hierarchical Regression Analysis revealed that impression management tactics strongly affect contextual performance, followed by task and adaptive performance. In particular, our research findings indicate that self-promotion tactics hurt adaptive performance, while ingratiation tactics positively affect task, adaptive, and contextual performance. Exemplification tactics positively affect task performance and contextual performance, while intimidation tactics negatively affect task, adaptive, and contextual performance. Supplication tactics, on the other hand, negatively affect task performance and contextual performance but positively impact adaptive performance.

Keywords: impression management, task performance, adaptive performance, contextual performance

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1. INTRODUCTION

Employees contribute to improving organizational performance through their attitudes, behaviours, and performance. Employee performance, both directly and indirectly, impacts the performance and success of the organization as a whole (Anwar & Sarfraz, 2023; Diamantidis & Chatzoglou, 2019; Phuong & Huy, 2022; Ingsih et al., 2022). Therefore, employee performance is the primary concern for every organization. For employees, individual performance ratings are critical because of their direct impact on careers and compensation. Consequently, employees engage in impression management tactics to help them achieve a favourable performance rating (Bande et al., 2023; Bolino et al., 2016). Impression management is essential to employee career success (Ni et al., 2023) and promotion to higher positions (Cheng et al., 2013). Moreover, impression management tactics allow employees to adapt their behaviour to the demands of the situation, leading to the achievement of personal and professional goals at work (Jaiswal & Bhal, 2014).

Linking impression management tactics to employees' performance has long been a primary concern for scholars and practitioners. Impression management refers to the efforts made by a person (that is, strategies, tactics, actions) to build, enhance, or modify their self-image in the eyes of others, which may benefit the actor (Edeh et al., 2023; Chawla et al., 2021). Employees are involved in impression management, either intentionally or unintentionally, because the final results of their performance are not entirely separated from the subjectivity of the appraiser in the performance appraisal process, even though the performance appraisal process already uses objective measures (Bande et al., 2017). Moreover, the performance ratings issued by supervisors are very likely to be representative of employee impression management tactics (Koen et al., 2019). This situation encourages an employee to engage outside his official core job role to find ways to be liked by raters.

Effective impression management can produce favourable results because the target will perceive the actor as competent, powerful, acceptable, and the like. The impression created by employees leads to supervisor satisfaction (Bande et al., 2023; Asadullah et al., 2016), trustworthiness (Long, 2021), high performance levels (Bande et al., 2023; Guo et al., 2021; Klehe et al., 2014), promotion opportunities (Nevicka & Sedikides, 2021), career (Sibunruang & Kawai, 2021), job creativity (Shin & Hyun, 2019), coworker support (Edeh et al., 2023), self-esteem (Szcześniak et al., 2021). Therefore, impression management tactics are an option for some employees to boost overall job performance levels alongside technical efforts at work to improve actual or objective performance.

The most widely accepted and researched impression management tactics consist of five tactics: self-promotion, ingratiation, exemplification, intimidation, and supplication (Chawla et al., 2021; Khizar et al., 2021; Thompson-Whiteside et al., 2018). Some tactics are classified as positive tactics, i.e., self-promotion, ingratiation, and exemplification (Krieg et al., 2018; Lukacik & Bourdage, 2019; Chawla et al., 2021), while intimidation and supplication tactics are classified as negative tactics (Haber & Brouer, 2017; Lukacik & Bourdage, 2019). Although empirical research has confirmed that positive tactics lead to positive consequences, while negative tactics will produce the opposite (Khizar et al., 2021; Edeh et al., 2023), several other studies have provided different empirical conclusions (De Cuyper et al., 2014). Impression management tactics can also have a "double-edged sword" effect on employee performance. Impression management strategies can produce images desired or not desired by the actor (Turnley & Bolino, 2001). According to Turnley & Bolino (2001), actors may expect that the impression management tactics (ingratiation, self-promotion, exemplification, supplication, and intimidation) will produce the desired image (in the form of someone who is likable, competent, dedicated, needy, and influential). Still, in the eyes of the target, these tactics produce the opposite image (sycophant, conceited, feels superior, lazy, bossy). Several previous studies confirmed the dual impact of impression management tactics (Reimann et al., 2022; Guo et al., 2021; Crawford et al., 2019). The literature showed that some impression management tactics can backfire on employees, for example, intimidation tactics can induce fear, lower job satisfaction, and increase turnover intention (Meisler, 2020). Using intimidation tactics also negatively affects performance assessed by supervisors (Kimura et al., 2018).

Although empirical research on impression management strategies has succeeded in uncovering their impact on job performance, most were limited to the general construct of job performance (Bande et al., 2017; Cheng et al., 2013) and supervisor evaluations (Bande et al., 2023; Kimura et al., 2018; Crawford et al., 2019; Harris et al., 2007). Several studies have examined the impact of impression management on more specific dimensions, such as task performance (Shin & Hyun, 2019; Cheng et al., 2014). There is a lack of research examining the effect of impression management tactics on specific dimensions of individual employee performance, primarily contextual and adaptive performance. We argue that more studies are needed to explore the impact of impression management tactics on all dimensions of individual employee performance, including task, adaptive, and contextual performance. The task performance dimension reflects the employee's ability to carry out core work tasks, adaptive

performance allows employees to develop their potential to face the challenges of an increasingly changing environment, and contextual performance shows the employee's ability to maintain harmonious and mutually beneficial relationships with co-workers.

Moreover, there is a gap in the literature about the overall impact of impression management tactics on employee performance. Existing research in this area is focused on revealing the impact of one or two types of impression management tactics (e.g., Asadullah et al., 2016; Bande et al., 2023; Cheng et al., 2013; Crawford et al., 2019; Kimura et al., 2018). Positive impression management tactics, such as ingratiation, exemplification, and self-promotion, were the most frequently researched (Cheng et al., 2014; Khizar et al., 2021). We believe it is necessary to conduct research involving all types of impression management tactics (self-promotion, ingratiation, exemplification, intimidation, and solicitation) to compare the effectiveness of each tactic on the dimensions of employee performance studied. Thus, this study attempts to fill the gaps in the literature in the area of impression management and individual employee performance. In addition, this research also provides broader generalizability by studying employees who work in both the public and the private sectors.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Impression Management

Impression management is the process of creating and maintaining a desired self-image in the eyes of others, consciously or unconsciously (Thompson-Whiteside et al., 2018; Long, 2017). Employees want to appear in a particular image in the eyes of others in their interactions at work. Employees may try to build a positive image as competent, likable, or role model employees (Krieg et al., 2018). Meanwhile, several other employees try to appear as someone in power or helpless and needing help (Meisler, 2020). The image formed is believed to generate certain benefits for the actors, such as acceptance, positive performance appraisal, and a high OCB rating (Krieg et al., 2018).

Impression management tactics are commonly classified as positive and negative (Bolino et al., 2016). The impression management literature classifies self-promotion, ingratiation, and exemplification as positive tactics (Harris et al., 2007; Haber & Brouer, 2017; Chawla et al., 2021). Self-promotion attempts to create the impression of competence by highlighting achievements, contributions, and successes at work (Den Hartog et al., 2020; Molleman, 2019). Ingratiation is an attempt to increase personal attractiveness by pleasing the target through expressions of approval, praise, gifts, and favours (Bande et al., 2019). Exemplification refers to efforts to impress others by appearing as a role model, being dedicated, and showing more effort than necessary (Hart et al., 2020; Long, 2017). Intimidation and supplication tactics are generally classified as negative tactics (Chawla et al., 2021; Su et al., 2014). Intimidation tactics tend to make an unflattering impression on the target. An intimidation tactic affects targets by creating self-identities as powerful, dangerous, and intimidating (Kimura et al., 2018; Khan, 2015). Finally, supplication creates an image of the actor as helpless and, therefore, needing help and sympathy from the target (Stanley et al., 2020).

2.2 Employee Performance

Employee performance in a formal organization has a broad spectrum. Employee performance is reflected in the results and output produced by each employee, and is often interchanged with the term productivity (Ali et al., 2022; Tarigan et al., 2020). Employee performance is often assessed based on employees' efforts and actions to execute their tasks (Wassem et al., 2019). Employee performance also refers to the employee's ability to fulfill the job role and function (Kaltainen & Hakanen, 2022). The literature on employee performance in the last few decades has resulted in more precise conceptualizations and empirical evidence about individual employee performance constructs: task performance, adaptive, and contextual performance (Desta et al., 2022; Pradhan & Jena, 2017; Ashraf et al., 2018).

It is crucial to research individual performance as a multidimensional construct because it impacts organizational performance (Nyathi & Kekwaletswe, 2023) and its ability to achieve competitive advantage (Ijigu et al., 2023). As a multidimensional construct, employee performance includes in- and extra-role performance and the ability to adapt to organizational changes. Although task performance is essential for organizational success, especially in the short term, forgetting other aspects, such as employee adaptive and contextual performance, can be detrimental to long-term organizational performance and effectiveness. Increasing work demands and pressure have forced employees to be able to learn, think and act quickly and adapt to changes in roles and work environments (Choeni et al., 2023). Additionally, contextual performance, such as OCB, has been proven to have a vital impact on organizational effectiveness and competitive advantage (Farid et al., 2019; Paul et al., 2019). Apart from that, a close relationship exists between one performance dimension and other dimensions. For

example, employees can achieve beneficial contextual performance if they are skilled in implementing their job tasks (Al Balushi et al., 2022). Similarly, contextual performance supports task performance by creating a conducive social and psychological environment (Wojtkowska et al., 2021).

2.3 Impression Management Tactics and Task Performance

Task performance is defined as the extent to which employees meet the expectations, requirements, and demands of official job roles, as stated in the formal job description documents (Sorlie et al., 2022). Task performance is a technical task formally requested by an organization, generally in the form of work behaviour that contributes to producing goods or providing services (Begall et al., 2022). Task performance is often called in-role behaviour because it relates to core technical tasks (Cohen & Abedallah, 2020; Stirpe et al., 2022). Employees pursue an excellent task performance rating since it becomes a basis for major organizational decisions, such as pay rises and promotions (Harris et al., 2007), tempting them to engage in impression management practices (Molleman, 2019).

The most frequently used impression management tactics were positive tactics such as self-promotion, ingratiation, and exemplification (Segrest et al., 2020; Krieg et al., 2018). Self-promotion tactics produce the actor's impression of competence, ingratiation makes a kind and friendlier person, and exemplification creates a dedicated and hard-working person (Stanley et al., 2020). The impression management literature suggests that self-promotion, ingratiation, and exemplification tactics can improve performance ratings (Cheng et al., 2014). Nevertheless, several studies report mixed findings regarding the impact of self-promotion (Gross et al., 2021) and exemplification tactics (Crawford et al., 2019) on job performance. In contrast, most of the empirical evidence supports the notion of the positive impact of ingratiation on employee performance levels (Haber & Brouer, 2017; Shin & Hyun, 2019).

On the other hand, intimidation and supplication tactics are considered harmful and have received less attention through empirical research (McGowan & Sekaja, 2022; Bolino et al., 2016). Employees who use intimidation tactics expect the target to think that actors are powerful and dangerous (Asawo & George, 2018). Conversely, the supplication tactic will produce the belief that the actors are helpless and need help (McGowan & Sekaja, 2022). Although intimidation tactics can create a target's fear, empirical evidence suggests that their impact on task performance tends to be negative (Kimura et al., 2018; Chawla et al., 2021). While the supplication tactic produced mixed effects on performance, both were positive (Cheng et al., 2013) and negative (Chawla et al., 2021). Hence, we predict:

Hypothesis 1: Task performance is positively affected by a) self-promotion, b) ingratiation, and c) exemplification tactics, and negatively by d) intimidation and e) supplication tactics.

2.4 Impression Management Tactics and Adaptive Performance

Adaptive performance refers to the ability of employees to learn and adapt work behaviour flexibly to changes in core task roles and the work environment within the organization (Tan & Antonio, 2022; Park & Park, 2021). Adaptive performance is in-role behaviour related to the organization's changes, significantly contributing to organizational efficiency (Bataineh et al., 2022). Adaptive performance describes the extent to which employees successfully adapt to their role and work environment so that they can meet the demands of the changing role and work environment (Vakola et al., 2021), while impression management tactics are efforts to adjust their self-image to the image desired by the actor (Edeh et al., 2023). Adaptive performance requires employees to be more flexible and creative. Creative employees tend to engage in impression management tactics because they are concerned about creative reputation maintenance (Carnevale et al., 2021). Therefore, we can assume that employees who engage in impression management tactics are likely to adapt to changes in the work environment.

Positive impression management tactics (i.e., self-promotion, ingratiation, exemplification) are predicted to be closely related to employee adaptive performance. Effective self-promotion tactics will produce the impression of competence (McGowan & Sekaja, 2022; Stanley et al., 2020). Competent employees will gain access to visibility and networking and tend to have high levels of self-confidence. Employees who engage in self-promotion tactics are also promotion-focused people. According to Kim et al. (2021), employees who focus on promotion tend to be more flexible and adaptive, so they are more open to receiving new knowledge from supervisors and coworkers. Empirically, self-promotion can encourage employees to engage in taking charge behaviour (Liu et al., 2019), a form of change-oriented behaviour.

The ingratiation tactic is effective in long-term interpersonal relationships (Shin & Hyun, 2019), where actors freely disclose sensitive personal information, agree on opinions, and show personal

interest in targets (Stanley et al., 2020). Moreover, Shin & Hyun (2019) concluded that ingratiation can encourage employee work creativity. The exemplification tactics show personal dedication and good work morale, so actors exert more effort on a task (McGowan & Sekaja, 2022). On the other hand, intimidation and supplication tactics tend to make the target react negatively to the actor (Bolino et al., 2016). Intimidation tends to generate the fear of potential harm from the actor, which is more likely to result in avoidance or attempts to create self-defense mechanisms than self-development. Finally, supplication produces an image of the actor's weakness and powerlessness in facing work challenges, tending to expect exceptions. Hence, we expect:

Hypothesis 2: Adaptive performance is positively affected by a) self-promotion, b) ingratiation, and c) exemplification tactics, and negatively by d) intimidation and e) supplication tactics.

2.5 Impression Management Tactics and Contextual Performance

Contextual performance refers to work behaviour outside of formal job duties that is discretionary and voluntary, which drives the effectiveness of achieving organizational goals by contributing to the social and psychological environment in which the technical core has to function (Begall et al., 2022; Sørli et al., 2022). Contextual performance is called extra-role behaviour (Van Den Heuvel et al., 2020; Stirpe et al., 2022; Frank & Kohn, 2023). Employees may exhibit extra-role behaviour because they have certain motives to achieve their personal goals. For example, helping behaviour, a form of OCB, can be driven by egoistic and altruistic motives (Cheung et al., 2018). Other studies conclude that OCB, as a form of employee contextual performance, is driven by impression management motives (Meng et al., 2024; Qiu et al., 2020).

Target-focused impression management tactics (ingratiation and exemplification) are assumed to drive contextual performance automatically. Ingratiation tactics have a central role in long-term interpersonal relationships, in which actors exhibit a variety of behaviours aimed at pleasing the target, elevating others, or demeaning themselves, agreeing with the opinions of others (Klehe et al., 2014). This behaviour is carried out repeatedly throughout the interaction with the target, eventually becoming a habit carried out consciously without prioritizing specific interests. For example, employees who assist coworkers may initially have a hidden agenda. However, it will still be carried out in the end even though the given aid has not yet produced the desired results. The exemplification tactics force actors to arrive at work early and leave later or limit days off (Long, 2017). These efforts ultimately received a positive assessment from the target because actors were seen as role models in the workplace. Effective self-promotion tactics can also significantly boost contextual performance when actors demonstrate competence.

The intimidation tactics will lead the targets to react negatively to the actor (Bolino et al., 2016). Empirical evidence concluded that intimidation tactics directly impact workload (Kimura et al., 2018). In general, intimidation tactics can create an uncomfortable work environment, hinder cooperation, and raise suspicion in the workplace. Likewise, effective supplication tactics can produce the image that the actor is weak, unreliable, and dependent. This image slowly causes actors to need more trust in others to carry out extra responsibilities at work. Chuang et al. (2018) found that supplication tactics negatively affect supervisors' assessment of employee contextual performance. Therefore, we will test this hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3: Contextual performance is positively affected by a) self-promotion, b) ingratiation, and c) exemplification tactics, and negatively by d) intimidation and e) supplication tactics.

3. METHODS

3.1 Participants

Three hundred and thirteen employees who work in various public and private organizations in Bengkulu Province, Indonesia, voluntarily participated in this research. Data were collected using an online survey. Table 1 shows the characteristics of the participants based on gender, age, tenure, organization type, and job level. The most significant composition of respondents was male, aged 41 to 50 years, ranging from 16 to 25 years of tenure, working in public organizations and as staff or non-managerial employees.

Table 1. The characteristics of respondents

No.	Classification	Frequencies	Percentage
1.	Gender		
	Male	202	64.5
	Female	111	35.5
2.	Age		
	Up to 30 years old	82	26.2
	31 - 40 years old	74	23.6
	41 - 50 years old	137	43.8
	More than 50 years old	20	6.4
3.	Tenure		
	Up to 5 years	83	26.5
	6 - 15 years	90	28.8
	16 - 25 years	129	41.2
	More than 25 years	11	3.5
4.	Organization Type		
	Public	218	69.6
	Private	95	30.4
5.	Job Level		
	Staff/Non-managerial	234	74.8
	Managerial Employees	79	25.2

3.2 Measures

To measure impression management tactics, we adopted 44 items developed by Bolino & Turnley (1999): ten self-promotion items, eight ingratiation items, eight exemplification items, eight intimidation items, and ten supplication items. Individual employee performance was measured by 23 items developed by Pradhan & Jena (2017), comprising six task performance items, seven adaptive performance items, and ten contextual performance items. All measurement items were applied to the semantic differential scale, which was 1 = never to 5 = always. Several items employed an inverse score®, where 1 = always to 5 = never. Five control variables were also included in the analyses, i.e., gender, age, tenure, organization type, and job level. Gender, organization type, and job level were measured using a dummy variable: 1 = male, civil servants, and managerial level; and 0 = women, private sector employees, and non-managerial level employees. These five control variables were included in the analyses since they potentially impact individual employee performance.

3.3 Analyses

The validity of each measurement item was evaluated using the loading factors resulting from Factor Analysis. The loading factors' value was ≥ 0.4 and was not loaded on two factors considered valid items. The reliability of each variable was evaluated based on the value of Cronbach's Alpha: $\alpha \geq 0.8$ is regarded as good reliability. A two-step hierarchical regression analysis (HRA) approach was applied to each dependent variable to test the research hypotheses. The control variables were regressed on the dependent variable in the first step. This analysis aimed to neutralize the effects of control variables that may exist on the dependent variable. By including control variables, we can ensure that independent variables, not control variables, provide the explained data variance (reflected in the R^2 value). The controls and independent variables were simultaneously regressed on the dependent variables in the next step. All data analyses were run using the SPSS 16.0 package.

4. RESULTS

Table 2 shows items of impression management tactics considered valid items. A total of ten items were dropped because they had a factor loading below 0.4 or were loaded at two different factors. The ten items dropped were one self-promotion item, two each for intimidation, supplication, and exemplification, and three for ingratiation tactics. The total data variance explained by the five factors was 55.771%.

Table 2. Validity of the items of impression management measurement

Item	Statements	Factor Loading				
		1	2	3	4	5
Self-promotion						
Sp1	Trying to make people aware of my accomplishments.	.692				
Sp2	Trying to make the positive events I'm responsible for seem better.	.664				
Sp3	Taking responsibility for positive events, even if it's not my sole responsibility.	.410				
Sp4	Making the negative events I'm responsible for seem less severe.	.756				
Sp5	Displaying the certificates and/or awards I've received.	.728				
Sp6	Telling others that I am competent in particular areas.	.725				
Sp7	Flaunting my talents or qualifications.	.776				
Sp8	Declaring my opportunities outside of my current job.	.744				
Sp10	Trying to distance myself from negative events that I was involved in.	.667				
Intimidation						
Inti3	Threatening the coworker or subordinates.		.780			
Inti4	Making people aware I can control things that matter to them.		.777			
Inti5	Punishing people when they don't behave the way I want them to.		.770			
Inti6	Insulting or demeaning coworkers.		.805			
Inti7	Trying to embarrass people in front of their peers or superiors.		.832			
Inti8	Trying to appear as an unapproachable person		.781			
Supplication						
Su2	Advertising about my incompetence in a particular area.			.760		
Su3	Pretending not to understand something I do understand.			.688		
Su5	Asking for help that I don't really need			.718		
Su6	Trying to appear helpless and needy			.623		
Su7	Asking a lot of questions deliberately.			.728		
Su8	Downplaying my achievements.			.752		
Su9	Letting others win the argument with me.			.642		
Su10	Trying to agree with others even when I might disagree.			.720		
Exemplification						
Exe1	Arrive at work early to appear dedicated.				.784	
Exe2	Working late at the office so that others see me.				.742	
Exe5	Pretending to be busy even though I am not.				.726	
Exe6	Making sure I am never seen wasting time at work.				.697	
Exe7	Arranging things on my desk to look like work is being done.				.764	
Exe8	Letting people know how much overtime I work.				.702	
Ingratiation						
Ing3	Offering assistance for someone that I am not required to do.					.766
Ing4	Complimenting others on their clothes or appearance.					.779
Ing5	Agreeing with a person's major ideas or beliefs.					.739
Ing6	Showing interest in the personal lives of coworkers and supervisors.					.655
Ing8	Listening to others' personal problems, even if I have little interest in them					.766
	Variance Explained (%)	14.80	11.49	11.45	9.964	8.055

The items of individual employee performance that meet the validity requirements are presented in Table 3. Out of the 23 items asked of the respondents, the remaining 18 items meet the validity requirements. Five items were dropped: two adaptive and three contextual performance items. All six items of task performance measures meet the validity requirements. The total data variance explained by task, adaptive, and contextual performance reached 57.589%.

Table 3. Validity of the items of employee’s performance measurement

Item	Statements	Loading Factors		
		1	2	3
Contextual Performance				
CP1	Assisting my coworkers when asked or needed.	.742		
CP3	Extending sympathy and empathy to coworkers when they are in trouble.	.606		
CP5	Praising coworkers for their good work.	.756		
CP6	Feel great satisfaction from guiding others in the organization.	.733		
CP8	Maintaining good coordination among fellow workers.	.643		
CP9	Guiding new colleagues beyond my job purview.	.653		
CP10	Communicating effectively with colleagues for problem-solving and decision-making.	.611		
Task Performance				
TP1	Maintaining high work standards		.684	
TP2	Capable of handling my assignments with little supervision.		.717	
TP3	Very passionate about the job		.733	
TP4	Able to handle multiple assignments to achieve organizational goals.		.719	
TP5	Accustomed to completing assignments on time		.728	
TP6	My colleagues consider me a high performer in my organization.		.772	
Adaptive Performance				
AP2	Able to manage change in my job very well whenever the situation demands.			.865
AP3	Able to handle work teams effectively in the face of change.			.832
AP4	Believing that mutual understanding can lead to a viable solution in the organization.			.760
AP6	Very comfortable with work flexibility			.754
AP7	Successfully coping with organizational changes from time to time.			.877
	Variance Explained (%)	20.625	19.078	17.886

Means, standard deviations, and correlations between variables are presented in Table 4. Respondents reported their levels of exemplification and intimidation in the moderate range, while self-promotion, ingratiation, supplication, task performance, adaptive, and contextual performance were in the moderate-to-high range. The correlation among research variables met the expected direction, although several independent variables were uncorrelated with the dependent variables. The correlation between the controls and dependent variables was insignificant. All research variables have a good level of reliability (Cronbach's Alpha value in parentheses) ranging from .830 to .914.

Table 4. Mean, standard deviation, and zero-order correlation

No.	Variables	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1.	Gender	.650	.479													
2.	Age	38.950	9.203	.162**												
3.	Tenure	13.320	7.966	.143*	.950**											
4.	Organization Type	.700	.461	.077	.162**	.135*										
5.	Job Level	.252	.435	.046	.199**	.215**	.048									
6.	Self-promotion	3.306	.853	.131*	.233**	.214**	.121*	-.003	(.907)							
7.	Ingratiation	3.659	.714	-.053	-.051	-.050	-.004	-.011	.224**	(.830)						
8.	Exemplification	2.739	.843	.016	.009	.002	.025	-.034	.165**	-.024	(.853)					
9.	Intimidation	2.193	.806	.172**	.263**	.223**	.184**	-.037	.429**	-.192**	.208**	(.914)				
10.	Supplication	3.142	.913	.123*	.172**	.167**	.179**	.009	.555**	-.005	-.142*	.354**	(.906)			
11.	Task Performance	3.869	.698	-.106	-.023	.004	-.007	.101	.038	.531**	.074	-.322**	-.188**	(.886)		
12.	Adaptive Performance	3.742	.804	.020	-.112*	-.091	-.021	.071	-.218**	.159**	-.043	-.350**	-.093	.310**	(.898)	
13.	Contextual Performance	3.900	.697	-.056	-.093	-.072	-.065	.059	.038	.580**	.090	-.343**	-.224**	.729**	.381**	(.889)

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 5 presents the results of the two-step HRA for each dependent variable. No control variables included in the analysis in the first step significantly affected the dependent variables. The relatively

small data variance was explained by the control variables for each task, adaptive, and contextual performance ($R^2 = .028, .025, \text{ and } .021$, respectively). In the second step, the regression results show that self-promotion ($\beta = .097, \rho = .125$) did not affect task performance, so hypothesis 1a was unsupported. Ingratiation ($\beta = .464, \rho \leq .001$) and exemplification ($\beta = .102, \rho \leq .05$) had a positive effect on task performance, thus hypotheses 1b and 1c were supported. Intimidation ($\beta = -.248, \rho \leq .001$) and supplication ($\beta = -.151, \rho \leq .05$) had a negative effect on task performance, providing support for hypotheses 1d and 1e. This equation's F value (18,779) was significant at $\rho \leq .001$, indicating that the model was good and can be interpreted further. There was an increase in R^2 ($\Delta R^2 = .355$) from .028 in step 1 to .383 in step 2.

Table 5. The results of hierarchical regression analysis (β)

Variables	Task Performance		Adaptive Performance		Contextual Performance	
	Step1	Step2	Step1	Step2	Step1	Step2
Control variables						
Gender	-.105	-.049	.040	.091	-.039	.020
Age	-.240	-.141	-.264	-.087	-.221	-.125
Tenure	.223	.203	.134	.060	.133	.117
Organization type	.005	.049	-.004	.031	-.048	-.001
Job Level	.105	.086	.093	.061	.079	.060
Dependent variables						
Self-promotion	-	.097	-	-.222**	-	.116
Ingratiation	-	.464***	-	.158**	-	.510***
Exemplification	-	.102*	-	.079	-	.111*
Intimidation	-	-.248***	-	-.299***	-	-.247***
Supplication	-	-.151*	-	.136*	-	-.184***
F	1.776	18.779***	1.562	6.271***	1.314	23.943***
R2	.028	.383	.025	.172	.021	.442
$\Delta R2$	-	.355	-	.147	-	.421

***. Regression is significant at the $\rho \leq .001$.

** . Regression is significant at the $\rho \leq .01$.

*. Regression is significant at the $\rho \leq .05$.

Interestingly, hypotheses 2a and 2e were unsupported. We expected self-promotion would positively affect adaptive performance; however, the result provided a negative effect ($\beta = -.222, \rho \leq .01$). Conversely, we predicted that supplication would negatively impact adaptive performance; however, our analyses resulted in a positive impact of supplication on adaptive performance ($\beta = .136, \rho \leq .05$). Ingratiation positively affected adaptive performance ($\beta = .158, \rho \leq .01$), hypothesis 2b received support. Meanwhile, exemplification did not affect adaptive performance ($\beta = .079, \rho = .164$). Thus, hypothesis 2c was not supported. Hypothesis 2d was supported; intimidation ($\beta = -.299, \rho \leq .001$) had a negative effect on adaptive performance. This equation's F value (6.271) is significant at $\rho \leq .001$, indicating that the model was good. There was an increase in R^2 ($\Delta R^2 = .147$) from .025 in step 1 to .172 in step 2.

Self-promotion ($\beta = .106, \rho = .055$) did not affect contextual performance; hypothesis 3a was not supported. Hypotheses 3b and 3c received support, ingratiation ($\beta = .510, \rho \leq .001$) and exemplification ($\beta = .111; \rho \leq .05$) had a positive effect on contextual performance. Moreover, hypotheses 3d and 3e also received support; intimidation ($\beta = -.247; \rho \leq .001$) and supplication ($\beta = -.184, \rho \leq .001$) had a negative effect on contextual performance. This equation's F value (23.943) indicates that the model was good, significant at $\rho \leq .001$. There was an increase in R^2 ($\Delta R^2 = .421$) from .021 in step 1 to .442 in step 2.

Our findings lead to the conclusion that the impression management strategy significantly affected employees' performance. Impression management tactics consisting of self-promotion, ingratiation, exemplification, intimidation, and supplication, respectively, were able to explain the data variance on the contextual performance of 42.1% ($\Delta R^2 = .355$), task performance 35.5% ($\Delta R^2 = .355$), and adaptive performance 14.7% ($\Delta R^2 = .147$), after controlling for the control variables (gender, age, tenure, organization type, and job level).

5. DISCUSSION

We found that self-promotion tactics do not significantly impact task and contextual performance. Our study's results align with several previous studies (Chawla et al., 2021; Bande et al., 2017), which

conclude that, in general, self-promotion tactics do not significantly impact employee performance. Self-promotion tactics only boost task performance if they meet several conditions, including a self-promotion climate (Gross et al., 2021), low job clarity (Molleman et al., 2011), self-monitoring (Bande et al., 2017), political skill (Haber & Brouer, 2017; Harris et al., 2007), external support (O'Mara et al., 2019), short-term relationships (Gross et al., 2021; Chiang & Chen, 2014), or high levels of target narcissism (Den Hartog et al., 2020). Interestingly, our research concluded that self-promotion tactics negatively affect employees' adaptive performance. This result challenges previous studies, which concluded that self-promotion encouraged employees to engage in change-oriented behaviour, such as taking charge (Liu et al., 2019). Our research tends to support Bande et al. (2019), who argue that self-promoters experience a degree of emotional exhaustion and run out of the energy necessary to engage in proactive behaviour.

Although self-promotion tactics have the potential to produce positive effects, such as self-confidence, visibility, and networking, empirical evidence confirmed that self-promotion more often has negative impacts in some conditions. Firstly, self-promotion can produce a negative assessment of the environment if done repeatedly. Employee interpersonal relationships with coworkers occur in long-term relationships as long as they work in the same organization. Interpersonal relationships in work life over time lead to repeated self-promotion tactics. According to McGowan & Sekaja (2022), self-promotion that is carried out with the same target may initially be liked, but this liking decreases over time. Secondly, the effectiveness of self-promotion tactics is highly dependent on social and political skills. More socially skilled individuals can earn higher performance ratings using self-promotion tactics (Bolino et al., 2016). Thirdly, there is a gap between the image the actor expects and the image the target perceives. As a self-focused tactic, self-promoters risk being seen as insincere and overly self-aggrandizing (Crawford et al., 2019). Even accurate claims of self-promotion are, to some extent, less likable than simple self-claims (O'Mara et al., 2019), because capable actors have higher standards regarding how good and honest they are expected to be (Reimann et al., 2022). Adverse reactions from the work environment cause actors to lose the opportunity to be involved in activities and access crucial organizational information, thus diluting potential visibility and networking and even reducing confidence. In many conditions, self-promoters have to allocate most of their time to prove their competence claims, reducing self-development time.

Consistent with the previous findings, our research concluded that ingratiation tactics positively impact all dimensions of individual employee performance. As a target-focused tactic, the ingratiation tactic produces a perception of liking and satisfaction from the target (Crawford et al., 2019). Liking and satisfaction can affect the actor's task performance ratings, especially if the ingratiation target is a supervisor. Other studies concluded that ingratiation tactics significantly impact work creativity (Shin & Hyun, 2019), facilitate career success (Sibunruang & Kawai, 2021), and reduce emotional exhaustion (Bande et al., 2019). Work creativity is an essential aspect of adaptive performance. Career success requires the ability of employees to adapt to various career levels and goals during their working lives. However, employees free from emotional exhaustion have a better capacity for self-development, including adaptability. Our conclusion also confirmed previous studies' findings on the positive impact of ingratiation on helping behaviour (Asadullah et al., 2016), team cohesiveness (Rozell & Gundersen, 2003), trust, and trustworthiness (Long, 2021). Helping behaviour is a form of employee contextual performance; at the same time, group cohesion and trustworthiness can facilitate employees supporting each other through citizenship behaviour, which is also an aspect of contextual performance. These findings imply that effective ingratiation tactics can boost employee task, adaptive, and contextual performance.

Our study concluded that exemplification tactics positively impact task and contextual performance rather than adaptive performance. Employees use exemplification tactics to be rated as dedicated and have high work morale by providing assistance, gifts, commitment, hard work, discipline, and self-sacrifice (McGowan & Sekaja, 2022). Another term for the exemplification tactic is self-sacrifice (Bande et al., 2023; Long, 2017) because actors sacrifice personal interests such as their time, attention, and resources to benefit the target, work environment, and organization. Although exemplification tactics are sometimes called manipulative or deceptive behaviour, the behaviour is genuine when it appears consistently (Bolino et al., 2016). Effective exemplification tactics will produce good performance evaluations for actors, especially contextual performance ratings, which are not directly related to the implementation of the formal core duties of the job. According to Krieg et al. (2018), successful impression management at work will increase positive performance evaluations and higher organizational citizenship behaviour.

Even so, the positive effect of exemplification on individual employee performance still needs broader empirical evidence, considering that several previous empirical studies have also concluded that exemplification does not affect employee performance (Chawla et al., 2021; Bande et al., 2023).

Our research concluded that exemplification tactics do not significantly impact adaptive performance. That is, employees who have invested a lot in work in the form of self-sacrifice cannot necessarily adapt to changes that occur in job roles and work environments. The most acceptable explanation for this finding is that the actor focuses more on efforts to impress others or get stuck in work routines. In contrast, adaptive performance is about learning new things and being involved in self-development. Another explanation is that health risk factors are potentially caused by exemplification tactics in the form of emotional exhaustion, especially among workers who experience job insecurity (De Cuyper et al., 2014).

Even though intimidation tactics are still found in the workplace, especially by supervisors or managers, to improve the subordinates' performance, this tactic is not recommended. Our results fully support the notion of the damaging nature of intimidation tactics. Our research concluded that intimidation tactics lower employee task, adaptive, and contextual performance. Although still limited, previous empirical research has also concluded that intimidation tactics reduce employee performance assessed by supervisors (Kimura et al., 2018) and job performance (Chawla et al., 2021). However, intimidation tactics can yield beneficial employee performance results if combined with ingratiation tactics. According to Bolino et al. (2016), intimidation tactics can positively impact individual employee performance by starting ingratiation tactics first to the target, followed by intimidation tactics. Intimidation tactics in this context tend to be a form of closeness supervision, which impacts the seriousness of employees executing their duties properly.

The intimidators believe that intimidation tactics will result in obedience (Stanley et al., 2020), so they can motivate employees to complete their job tasks. Due to negative emotions felt by the target, such as fear and anxiety, intimidation tactics will harm job satisfaction and increase turnover intention (Meisler, 2020). Negative emotions can inhibit work creativity, which in turn hurts the adaptive performance of employees. Anxiety and fear potentially trap employees in rigid work routines and neglect aspects of self-development. Other empirical evidence found that intimidation tactics can create bad relations with the targets (Chiang & Chen, 2014), for example, employees use intimidation tactics to respond to abusive supervision (Lukacik & Bourdage, 2019). Poor interpersonal relationships between actors and targets also erode mutual trust between them. Consequently, targets will be more reluctant to convey new ideas for improvement and become more closed to being involved in collaborations in the workplace.

The classification of supplication tactics as tactics that always have a negative impact is only partly accurate. Our results provided interesting empirical evidence regarding the effect of supplication tactics on employee performance. Supplication tactics were found to affect employee adaptive performance positively but they negatively affect task and contextual performance. Limited empirical studies of supplication have distorted our understanding of how these tactics impact employee performance. The supplication tactic produces an image that an actor is a weak person who needs to be assisted and protected (McGowan & Sekaja, 2022). However, supplication tactics only sometimes reflect the actual quality of the actor. The literature has shown that impression management behaviour by employees could be tactical or authentic (Long, 2021; Khizar et al., 2021). For example, a previous study found that women entrepreneurs used the supplication tactic to minimize the negative impact of their self-promotion by displaying their fears and weaknesses (Thompson-Whiteside et al., 2018). The basic assumption is that effective supplication tactics will lower actor self-esteem instead of producing higher individual performance levels (Turnley & Bolino, 2001). A willingness to learn and the ability to adapt to changes in roles and the work environment differ from reduced self-esteem. In fact, under certain conditions, negative evaluations that actors realize through feedback as weak and isolated individuals can function as triggers for further self-development.

Our finding is consistent with previous empirical evidence, which concluded that supplication tactics negatively affect employee performance (Chawla et al., 2021). Our results also confirmed the findings of Chuang et al. (2018), which concluded that supplication is closely related to low self-efficacy, thereby impairing supervisors' evaluation of OCB. Employees who engage in supplication tactics aim to gain sympathy and favour or avoid unwanted assignments (Stanley et al., 2020) by appearing incompetent. Therefore, it makes sense that employees charged with complex duties will appear weak and incompetent, thus deserving of low evaluations in the task and contextual performance. When employees avoid specific assignments through supplication tactics, the jobs will be carried out by other employees, voluntarily or not. That is, supplication behaviour is the antithesis of task performance and contextual performance. An effective supplication tactic will result in employees not having to do the tasks they should be doing or being relieved of other extra duties.

5.1 Theoretical Implications

Our research contributes significantly to the literature in several ways. *Firstly*, our research findings challenge categorizing impression management tactics as positive or negative. Impression management literature viewed self-promotion, ingratiation, and exemplification as positive impression tactics (Chawla et al., 2021; Lukacik & Bourdage, 2019; Chiang & Chen, 2014) that tend to have a positive impact on individual employee performance (Bande et al., 2023; Guo et al., 2021). Conversely, intimidation and supplication are considered negative tactics (Chawla et al., 2021; Lukacik & Bourdage, 2019), which hurt employee performance (Meisler, 2020). As an alternative, we propose that tactics of self-promotion, ingratiation, exemplification, intimidation, and supplication are on a continuum. Ingratiation tactics are at one end of the continuum; this tactic can boost all aspects of individual employee performance (i.e., task performance, adaptive, and contextual). Conversely, at the other end of the continuum, intimidation tactics worsen all three aspects of individual performance. The supplication tactic is between these two endpoints because it can have positive and negative impacts. Exemplification tends to be positive, and self-promotion tends to be negative.

Secondly, our study has filled the gaps in the literature by studying the impact of self-promotion, ingratiation, exemplification, intimidation, and supplication tactics on employees' performance. In contrast to the self-promotion and ingratiation tactics, which have attracted the attention of researchers, the exemplification, intimidation, and supplication tactics should be more addressed. Our research also enriches the literature by studying the impact of each of these tactics on the more specific aspects of individual performance, i.e., task, adaptive, and contextual performance, study of which so far has been limited (Cheng et al., 2013).

Finally, we involved respondents from various organizations in both the public and private sectors. Apart from the potential weaknesses that may arise, such as the sampling method's rigidity and the respondent's unclear role as an actor or target, our findings better reflected the actual conditions in the workplace. In general, employees, as do their interpersonal interactions, work relatively long in an organization. A person may be an actor who employs impression management tactics at certain times but will be the target at other times. Even the role of actor/target can be played simultaneously, where an employee becomes the target of an impression management tactic by his superior and becomes the actor against his coworkers or subordinates or some other possible combination. Impression management tactics can be used against superiors (Harris et al., 2007; Chuang et al., 2018), subordinates (Meisler, 2020), or horizontally against coworkers or customers (Turnley & Bolino, 2001; Bande et al., 2019), consciously or unconsciously (Bolino et al., 2016; Crawford et al., 2019).

5.2 Practical Implications

From the employee's perspective, using ingratiation and exemplification tactics in authentic behaviour is, to a certain extent, still justifiable. Authentic behaviour is oriented towards mutually beneficial long-term interpersonal relationships by showing genuine effort and dedication. Authentic ingratiation and exemplification will result in genuinely likable and dedicated employees. Certain limits refer to ethical behaviour that does not conflict with the norms of social interaction, organizational values, and culture and is not carried out excessively. Excessive ingratiation and exemplification behaviours can consume resources, time, and attention and produce emotional exhaustion. Employees may be trapped in ingratiation and exemplification tactics, which are tactical at first, which is humane. Still, slowly, they can renew motivation and sincerity through a feedback system obtained from the attitudes and responses shown by the target. On the other hand, intimidation and self-promotion tactics should be avoided. The lure of a favourable outcome resulting from adopting these tactics has little empirical support. In fact, the potential dangers are very real, such as hostility, jealousy, and mutual suspicion. Moreover, employees should also be cautious about adopting supplication tactics due to their negative impact on task and contextual performance.

From the perspective of organizational interests, organizations have to consider all aspects of individual performance to achieve superior organizational performance. An overly strict focus on aspects of task performance, such as employee productivity, only partially contributes to short-term organizational performance. Therefore, organizations ought to also pay attention to adaptive and contextual performance that is more long-term oriented. Adaptive performance enables employees to adapt to changes in their roles and work environment, while contextual performance contributes to the efficiency of overall organizational functions. Organizations should create an organizational culture oriented towards inclusiveness and diversity in the workplace, which can encourage employees to build healthy interpersonal relationships with other members. Furthermore, organizations need to intervene in employee impression management tactics through Human Resource Management (HRM) practices, such as managing group/work team dynamics, employee training and development, performance management, compensation, and career management. These HRM practices should be directed at

cultivating strong organizational identification among employees so that self-serving orientation through impression management tactics can be suppressed. Organizations can also provide space for authentic ingratiation and exemplification tactics that encourage employees to engage in healthy and long-term oriented interpersonal relationships. On the other hand, organizations need to minimize the opportunities for employees to engage in intimidation tactics and excessive self-promotion. This policy will be more effective if it starts from the top of the organizational hierarchy with a top-down approach through leadership style.

6. CONCLUSION

Our study concludes that impression management tactics such as self-promotion, ingratiation, exemplification, intimidation, and supplication significantly impact employees' tasks and adaptive and contextual performance. All five impression management tactics substantially affect contextual performance, followed by task and adaptive performance. Employees' contextual performance will increase when they adopt ingratiation and exemplification tactics but decrease if they engage in intimidation and supplication tactics. Employees who engaged in ingratiation and exemplification tactics achieved better task performance levels, while intimidation and supplication tactics hurt their task performance. Employees get higher levels of adaptive performance if they engage in ingratiation and supplication tactics; however, they will receive lower adaptive performance ratings if they employ self-promotion and intimidation tactics. In addition, the self-promotion tactics adopted by employees do not affect their contextual and task performance, while exemplification tactics have no impact on employees' adaptive performance.

6.1 Future Recommendations

We hope our findings can trigger more profound studies regarding the role of impression management tactics that have yet to be addressed so far, such as exemplification, intimidation, and supplication tactics. The effect of impression management tactics on employee individual performance also needs further investigation, especially their impact on adaptive and contextual performance. The adaptive aspect of employee performance is increasingly becoming relevant in dealing with and anticipating changes in the work environment, which has become a constant phenomenon. Even though the world has become increasingly globalized, cultural aspects still play a substantial role in workplace interactions and employee communications. Therefore, research on impression management tactics must also have to consider cultural factors, both on a broader level, such as national culture, and at a lower level, such as organizational culture and work culture.

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