IMPACT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE COMPETENCIES ON IMPRESSION CREATION:
Exploring the Mediating Role of Impression Management Skills

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ABSTRACT

The study intends to find out the impact of the emotional intelligence competencies on impression management skills and impression creation. It further investigates the mediating role of impression management skills with social and personal competencies and impression creation. The study was conducted from 200 employees of different franchises of the telecom companies. Correlation, regression and Sobel test were used to analyze and interpret the data. The results showed more impact of social competencies as compare to personal competencies on the impression management skills and impression creation. Research study further found that impression management mediates both of the relation i.e. relationship of the personal competencies and image creation and relationship of social competencies and image creation.

1.   INTRODUCTION

Why one individual gets more favorable attitude of manager when compared to other individual of equal performance and importance for the organization? It is the reality of the organizations that numbers of employees are with such skills which create their better relation with seniors. The secret could be revealed by the concept of impression management. Many people either for the increases in salary, securing the job, getting the benefits or for any other reasons try to develop a better image of theirs in the eyes of the seniors. The process is known as impression management (Ronald R. Sims, 2002).

Emotional intelligence is defined as "ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" (Salovey & Mayer, 1997). Emotional intelligence has four dimensions which are (i) self awareness of emotions, (ii) self management of emotions, (iii) social competencies and (iv) social skills (Petrides and Furnham, 2000). The people having high self monitoring ability/skills create better image by using social cues as compare to individual with low self monitoring skills as well as individual with high self monitoring are able to understand others behavior as well (Graziano and Bryant, 1998).

Emotion researchers also examined the role of emotional skills in social dealings and interpersonal relationships. Most of the researches identified that social skills are necessary for leaders of executive level; as individuals lead the organizational hierarchy, social intelligence becomes an increasingly significant determinant of who will and will not be successful (Hooijberg *et al.*, 1997; Zaccaro, 2001). Possessing emotional and social skills was also associated with higher value social relationships and more supportive social support systems (Riggio et al., 1993). Moreover, lack of emotional skill leads to low levels of social and emotional competence that can break down the organization (Perez and Riggio, 2003; Philippot et al., 2003)

1.1 Knowledge gap

According to Rozell and Gunderson's (2003) work, it is a matter of fact that impression management is associated with valuable and positive outcomes in an organization where there are number of awkward situations occurring daily. In Pakistan the concept of impression along with emotional intelligence is not under observation in many organizations and none of the researcher conducted any study on relationship of EQ and

managing impressions within the organizations. This study is going to give the knowhow of impression management and how emotional intelligence effects impression.

1.2 Problem Statement
To investigate the relationship of emotional intelligence dimensions with impression creation. Further the study is intended to measure the mediating role of self management skills on the relationship of emotional intelligence dimensions and the impression creation.

1.3 Objective
1. To explore the relationship of emotional intelligence competencies on impression creation.
2. To explore the relationship of emotional intelligence competencies on impression management skills
3. To explore the relationship of impression management skills on impression.
4. To explore the mediating role of impression management competencies on the relationship of impression creation and emotional intelligence competencies.

1.4 Practical Implications
The results of the study are expected to develop better understanding how to manage the impression management keeping in view the dimensions of emotional intelligence and impression management skills. The study would facilitate the individuals to create better relationship with the seniors and to enjoy the maximum fair benefits.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE
Impression management is the process by which the individual generates the positive views about himself/herself while controlling the negative views (Burgoon, Buller & Woodall, 1996). Impression management is not only something verbal but includes non-verbal behavior as well (Schlenker, 1980). The main objectives of the impression management are creating a desirable image, finding out how that image would be generated, and protecting or defending it when feel threatened (Dipboye, 1992). Tedeschi & Melburg, (1984) argued that Individual may generate short term impression to get the immediate benefits such as increasing the production or generate long term impression to get long term benefits. The known tactics and strategies are assertive and defensive (Tedeschi & Melburg, 1984). Assertive technique is to create the desireable image whereas the defensive technique is trying to fix the negative or non-desirable image by seniors ((Tedeschi & Melburg, 1984). The fact of non-verbal communication cannot be ignored in the social setting as it comprises of more than 60% part of communication.   (Burgoon et al., 1996). Social skills also being evaluated by the nonverbal behavior (Gifford et al, 1985). Nonverbal behavior/communication is always used where it creates a valuable impact ((Schlenker, 1980). To be an effective communicator one has to become the part of the environment or adapt the environment quickly (Schlenker, 1980). Such adoption is an ability of impression management and represents high self monitoring behavior (Dipboye, 1992). The individual with high self monitoring behavior is able to monitor the situation, find out who is in the situation and then change the behavior accordingly. The focus is on what behavior would be more appropriate in that particular situation (Danheiser and Graziano, 1982).

The concept of managing the skills of people is of exceptional importance for the making of beneficial executives, and the emotional intelligence is one main area of interaction or in other words a skill to survive in the organization (Salovey and Mayer,1990). Paulo N. Lopes, Marc A. Brackett, John B. Nezlek, Astrid Schütz, Ina Sellin and Peter Salovey, (2003), argued that there is a direct relationship between emotional intelligence and impression management attributes i.e. other self reported attributes, perceived quality of social interaction, self presentational success, self regard and esteem. Emotional intelligence enables individual capable to come up quickly from a disappointing or hurting situation or emotions (Salovey, Mayer, Goldman, Turvey, & Palfai, 1995). It also create the ability to recognize accurately, identify, and appreciate others emotions, sbecome flexible to change in the environment socially and develop networks (Salovey,Bedell, Detweiler, & Mayer, 1999).

According to the model of emotional intelligence presented/given by Salovey and Mayer, (1990) there are three capabilities of emotional intelligence. (i) appraisal of self and others mean the individual would be more emotionally intelligent if he assess quickly the emotional states. (ii) reaction on that experience (iii) ability to use creative thinking, motivation and planning to solve the problem (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Goleman (1998) initially identified five emotional intelligence skills which were (a) self awareness, (b) motivation, (c) adaptness in relationship, (d) empathy and (e) self regulations. Further he defined the emotional competence as "a learned capability based on emotional intelligence that results in outstanding performance at work". Goleman, (2001) grouped the competencies into (i) personal and (ii) social competencies. Personal competencies include self awareness and self regulations whereas social competencies include empathy and social skills.

Self awareness means own assessment and confidence where as self management/regulations comprises of emotional control, initiative, drive for achievement, and adaptability (Goleman, 2001). Personal competencies is the mixture of service orientation, awereness both of organization and of social, developing others, influencing others, communication, conflict resolution, collaborations, bond developments etc. (Goleman, 2001). It is very obvious that social competencies must have more impact on impression management as compared to personal competencies.

Based on the above discussion following hypothetical interaction and hypothesis may be inferred:
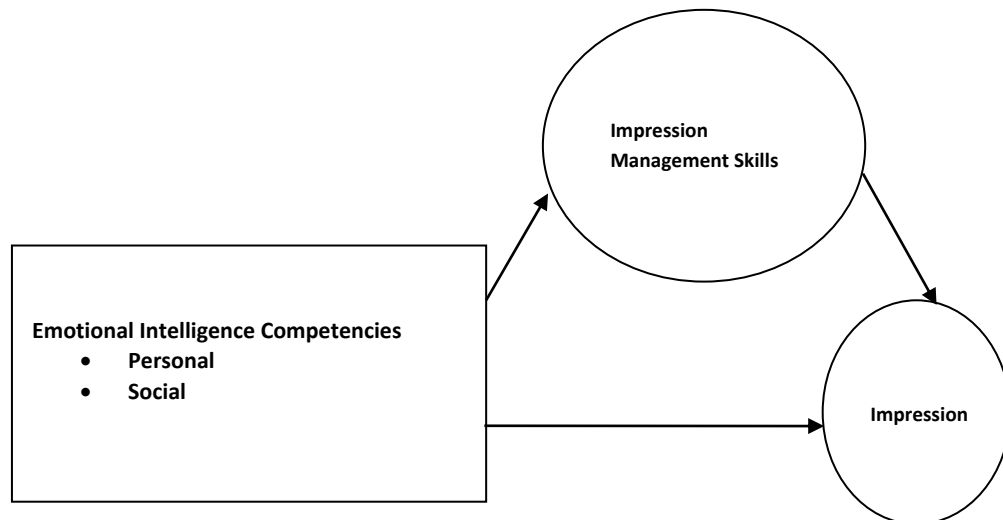
Source: Researchers' Proposed Model

Hypotheses:

H1. Personal Competencies play a positive role in creation of impression of an individual

H2. Personal Competencies significantly influence the impression management skills

H3. Social Competencies play a positive role in creation of impression of an individual

H4. Social Competencies significantly influence the impression management skills

H5. Impression Management Skills positively influence the creation of impression of an individual

H6. Impression Management mediates the relationship of personal competencies and impression creation

H7. Impression Management mediates the relationship of social competencies and impression creation

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
The study is casual and cross-sectional in nature exploring impact of emotional intelligence competencies on impression creation with a mediating role of impression management skills in telecom sector. Data was collected from the 200 employees and their immediate bosses of franchises of Telenor, Mobilink and Warid. Questionnaire was divided into two parts. First part was used to measure the competencies and impression management skills from the employees. The second part was used to assess the impressions of all such employees in the eyes of their immediate bosses. The second part was filled by the immediate bosses sharing what impression they are having of each who participated in the first part of the questionnaire. Reliability of all constructs were measured and found above 0.7 showing the reliability of the data.

4.   DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION
Correlation, regression and Sobel test were conducted to analyze the data and check the hypotheses. Correlation is one of the pre-requisite to conduct the Sobel test thus applied.

4.1 Hypotheses Testing

Table 4.1 Regression Analysis of Social and personal competencies and impression management skills on impression

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.638	.196		3.256	.001
Socialcompetence	.386	.083	.395	4.627	.000
Personalcompetence	.140	.061	.146	2.015	.048

a. Dependent Variable: levelofimage
source: Field Data

Table 4.2 Regression Analysis of Social and personal competencies on impression management skills

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.355	.233		1.523	.130
Socialcompetence	.668	.084	.612	7.910	.000
Personalcompetence	.260	.083	.243	3.141	.002

a. Dependent Variable: impressionmanagementskills
source: Field Data

Table 4.3 Regression Analysis of Social and personal competencies on impression management skills

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.248	.166		7.504	.000
Impressionmanagementskills	.719	.036	.814	19.695	.000

a. Dependent Variable: levelofimage
source: Field Data

Table 4.4 Sobel Test for the mediation of impression management skills

	Sobel Test Statistics	Std. Error	*p*-value
Personal competencies and impression creation	3.09469639	0.06040657	0.00197014
Social competencies and impression creation	7.38824815	0.06500756	0

Mediator: impression management skills

Source: Field Data

The first hypothesis of the study was that the personal competencies play a positive role in creation of impression of an individual. According to table 4.1 of regression analysis there is significant relationship of the personal competencies and impression creation process. The impact of the personal competencies, as per Beta value i.e. .146, on impression creation is found almost 15%. The second hypothesis of the study was that personal competencies significantly influence the impression management skills. According to table 4.2 of regression analysis there is significant relationship of the personal competencies and impression management skills. The impact of the personal competencies, as per Beta value i.e. .243, on impression management skills is found almost 24%. The third hypothesis of the study was that the social competencies play a positive role in creation of impression of an individual. According to table 4.1 of regression analysis there is significant relationship of the social competencies and impression creation process. The impact of the social competencies, as per Beta value i.e. .395, on impression creation is found almost 40%. The fourth hypothesis of the study was that social competencies significantly influence the impression management skills. According to table 4.2 of regression analysis there is significant relationship of the social competencies and impression management skills. The impact of the social competencies, as per Beta value i.e. .612, on impression management skills is found almost 61%.

The fifth hypothesis of the study was that impression management skills positively influence the creation of impression of an individual. According to table 4.3 of regression analysis there is significant relationship of the impression management skills and impression creation process. The impact of the impression management skills, as per Beta value i.e. .814, on impression creation is found almost 81%.

The sixth hypothesis was that impression management mediates the relationship of personal competencies and impression creation. The p value of Sobel test (table 4.4) shows that mediation exists and hypothesis proved true. The seventh hypothesis of the study was impression management mediates the relationship of social competencies and impression creation. The p value of the Sobel test (table 4.4) shows that mediation exists and hypothesis is true. However the Sobel statstics (table 4.4) clearly indicate the impact of mediation is more on the relationship of social competencies and the image creation.

4.2 Conclusion
Study concluded the following:

1. Emotional intelligence has an impact on image creation and impression management skills
2. The impact of social competencies on both impression management and image creation is greater as compare to the impact of personal competencies
3. The impression management skills mediates both of the relationship i.e. relationship of personal competencies and impression creation and relationship of social competencies and impression creation

4.3 Practical Implication
The study clearly indicates that people with high emotional intelligence create better impression on the seniors as compare to people with low emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence not only contributes in impression management skills but also directly contribute to the favorable impression creation. Further study demand more focus on social competencies instead of personal competencies for the better results and better image.

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