

경영학적 관점의 국가 간 인상관리 : 자메이카 VS 한국 - Stranger in a Foreign Land. How to Impress and how to be Impressed. A Comprehensive Review on the Differences of Impression Management Behavior between Two Culture: Jamaica and South Korea

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요약

본 연구는 자메이카와 한국과의 통합적 그리고 방어적 인상관리 행동 및 자신을 표현하고자 하는 행동에 있어서의 두 나라간 차이를 연구하였다. 인상관리행동에 관한 선행연구와 문화관련 연구들은 문화에서의 차이점들은 인상관리행동의 스타일을 결정한다고 주장하고 있다. 따라서 본 연구는 자메이카와 한국 문화 중 어떠한 요소들이 구성원들이 좀 더 인상관리 행동을 하는지 그리고 다른 국가 간 문화적 차이를 토대로 어떠한 인상관리행동의 차이를 보이는지 연구하였다.

자메이카와 한국의 102명 개인을 대상으로 설문 조사한 결과 양 국가에서의 인상관리 행동은 비슷한 점과 다른 점 두 가지를 모두 확인하였다. 비록 본 연구에서는 여러 제한점에도 불구하고, 본 연구의 두 국가 간 문화차이로 인해 조직 내 구성원들의 인상관리전략이 다르다는 것을 확인하였다. 특히 한국은 자메이카보다 좀 더 인상관리를 중요시 여기는 것으로 나타났다. 또한 자메이카는 방어적인 인상관리 행동을 높게 사용하는 반면 한국은 자기프로모션과 통합적 인상관리 전략을 좀 더 많이 사용하는 것으로 나타났다.

■ 중심어 : | 방어적인 인상관리 | 자기프로모션 인상관리 | 통합적 인상관리 | 문화 |

Abstract

This study examines the differences in the use of self promoting, ingratiating and defensive impression management behavior between Jamaica and South Korea. Previous researches on impression management behavior and culture suggests that differences in culture will determine the type of impression management behavior one uses. This study, therefore aimed to determine which of the two will be more motivated to engage in impression management behavior and does the use of impression management behavior differs based on the differences in culture. Analysis of 102 individuals from Jamaica and South Korea, through the use of questionnaire survey, shows both similarities and differences in the use of impression management behavior. Although there were a few limitations to this research, our findings do highlight some cross-cultural significant differences in the use of impression management behavior between both countries. Results showed that South Korean will be more likely than Jamaican to be motivated to engage in impression management. In addition, South Korean respondents reported higher use of self promoting and ingratiating impression management behavior while Jamaican respondents reported a higher use of defensive impression management behavior.

■ keyword : | Defensive Impression Management | Self Promotion Impression Management | Ingratiation Impression Management | Cultural Differences |

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I. Introduction

1. General Introduction/Background

As we are living in a globalized era, economy has forced individuals and groups that are foreign to each other in terms of verbal and non-verbal communication, culture and norms, to actively communicate and interact. Therefore, many organizations and their workers are embedded in an environment that increasingly requires interactions with and dependence on organizations and workers from other countries and cultures, [1]: Jamaica and South Korea are two such countries. South Korea and Jamaica, over the years, have established several bilateral cooperation agreements in various sectors, such as education, technical cooperation, disaster relief and culture[2]. With the relationship between both countries strengthening, it is important to understand each culture and how they work in order to minimize the risk of cultural shock, miscommunication and misperception because of ignorance of others cultural standards.

Hofstede[3] defined culture as “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or society from another.” In his study on national cultural dimensions, he identified four dimensions of culture that he labeled individualism/collectivism, masculinity/femininity, power distance and uncertainty avoidance. In order to understand the differences in culture between Jamaica and South Korea, this study utilizes the results from this study.

In a collectivistic culture, the interest of the group prevails over the interest of the individual. People are integrated into strong, cohesive in groups that continue throughout a lifetime to protect in exchange for unquestioning loyalty. Individualistic cultures, on the other hand, are characterized by an emphasis on

individual identity, individual goals and individual welfare. Individualism tends to prevail in developed and western countries, while collectivism prevails in less developed and eastern countries. Accordingly, Jamaica and South Korea are both considered collectivistic cultures. Masculinity culture reflects the extent to which members prefer stereotypically masculine values such as financial and other extrinsic rewards to stereotypically feminine values such as caring for others. Masculinity cultures stress assertiveness, competition and material success whereas feminine cultures are those that permit more overlapping social roles for the sexes. Cultures that place high value on feminine traits stress quality of life, interpersonal relationships, and concern for the weak. South Korea with a score of 39 is considered to be a feminine culture. Here, people strive for consensus, values equality, solidarity and quality in their working lives. Conflicts are resolve by compromise and negotiation. Incentive such as free time and flexibility are favored and focus is on wellbeing. Jamaica, on the other hand, with a score of 68 is considered to be a masculine culture. Here, people in authority are expected to be decisive and assertive. The emphasis is on equality, competition and performance and conflicts are resolved by fighting them out. Power distance is defined as the extent to which less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally. In high power distance cultures, people are expected to display respect for those in higher status. Low power distance cultures, on the other hand, are characterized by being independent, hierarchy for convenience only and equal rights. South Korea, with a score of 60, is considered to be a slightly hierarchical culture. People accept a hierarchical order in which everyone has a place and which need no further justification.

Inequality, centralization is popular and subordinates expect to be told what to do. Jamaica, on the other hand, with a low score of 45 is considered to be a low power distance culture. This culture is characterized by being independent, hierarchy for convenience only, equal rights, supervisors accessible, coaching leader, management facilitates and empowers. Power is decentralized and managers count on the experience of team members. Control is dislike and attitude towards superiors are informal and communication is direct and participative. Lastly uncertainty avoidance represents the extent to which members share beliefs and build institutions that protect them from discomfort and fear of ambiguous situations. In these cultures, such situations are avoided by maintaining strict codes of behavior and a belief in absolute truths. Cultures strong in uncertainty avoidance are active, aggressive, emotional, compulsive, security seeking and intolerant. Weak in uncertainty avoidance cultures, on the other hand, are contemplative, less aggressive, unemotional, relaxed, accepting of personal risks, and relatively tolerant. South Korea, with a score of 85, is considered to be one of the most uncertainty avoiding cultures in the world. In this culture, there is an emotional need for rules, time is money, people have an inner urge to be busy and work hard, precision and punctuality are the norm, and security is an important element in individual motivation. Jamaica, however, with a low score of 13, on this dimension has a low preference for avoiding uncertainty. This culture maintain a more relaxed attitude in which practice counts more than principles and deviance from the norm is more easily tolerated.

This study will focus specifically on impression management behavioral aspect of culture. Studying impression management as a culturally constructed phenomenon can contribute to the understanding of relationships and interactions in diverse organizational

settings, in multi-cultural teams, and in any setting in which immigrants or foreign workers encounter local people[4][5].

Impression management, also called self-presentation, is the process by which individuals attempt to control the impressions others form of them[6][7]. Impression management often results in certain behaviors including the use of verbal statements, non-verbal or expressive behavior patterns and modification of one's physical appearance[8]. In other words, people actively control their behaviors to achieve impressions they wish to make as well as to avoid people, situation, and characteristics contradictory to that desired image[1]. There are a few existing research on impression management strategies, however each researcher categorized and expand these strategies in different ways. Existing research [9-13], categorized impression management strategies in two major categories: assertive and defensive. Assertive impression management behaviors are used to acquire and promote favorable impressions and consist of both ingratiation and self-promotion behaviors. Whereas the assertive impression management is designed to bolster one's image, defensive impression management behaviors are designed to protect or repair one's image.

In recent years, considerable research has focused on impression management across cultures[14-17], however there is no research that focuses specifically on the use of impression management behavior between Jamaica and South Korea. As little is known, this study aimed to determine if the use of impression management behavior differs based on the differences in culture.

2. Cultural related assumptions

2.1 Self Promotion and Culture

Zaidman and Drory in their research suggested that

countries that are characterized by low levels of power distance will be more reluctant than those of high power distance countries to use self promotion impression management strategies[16].

Assumption 1: South Korea, characterized as a collectivistic but high power distance culture will use self promotion strategies more than their Jamaican counterpart, who is characterized as a collectivistic but low power distance culture.

2.2 Ingratiation and Culture

It is noted that ingratiation is culture-specific[18]. Hierarchical structures probably facilitate ingratiation and assume that a country in low power distance culture will tend to reject the use of ingratiation impression management behavior, especially towards those who are considered equal[19]. It was further suggested that in societies with large power distances, individuals will use ingratiation impression management tactics more often than individuals from low power distance societies[16].

Assumption 2: Jamaica, characterized by level of low power distance will be more reluctant to use ingratiation impression management strategies than their counterpart, South Korea who is characterized as a high power distance culture.

2.3 Defensive behavior and Culture

Research suggested that in cultures that hold collectivistic values, the self-system in such cultures is directed toward maintaining social harmony and not toward attaining positive self-evaluations. Therefore, self protection (defensive) strategies may be more prevalent in such cultures than those that hold individualistic values. Whereas individualistic cultures emphasize achievement and positive distinctiveness, collectivistic cultures emphasize fitting in and not violating social norms and

obligations[20].

Assumption 3: Since both Jamaica and South Korea are considered collectivistic cultures, this research assumes that there will be little or no significant differences in the use of defensive impression management strategies between both countries.

II. Materials and Methods

1. Sample and Procedure

Data for both Jamaican and South Korean participants were gathered using an online survey questionnaire. A total of 51 Jamaicans and 51 South Koreans completed the questionnaire. The average age group of participants was between 18 and 54. The questionnaire was sent via personal emails to participants in both countries. For participants in Jamaica, with the use of convenient sample an email including the request for participation and questionnaire was sent to individuals in different organizations. Those individuals were then asked on the behalf of the researcher to forward the questionnaire to their colleagues in their respective organizations. For Korean participants, in addition to the method mentioned above, face to face interaction was also used. Participants were given a deadline in which to complete the questionnaire. For Jamaican respondents the questionnaire was given in English however for Korean respondents, the questionnaire was translated to Korean.

Table 1. Sample Description

Country	# of Res	Age range	Status	Gender
Jamaica	51	18-54	-Employed -University Students	M (19) F (32)
South Korea	51	23-52	-Employed -University Students	M(16) F(33)

2. Measures

Self promotion and Ingratiation impression management behavior was measured, using the 4 items each of the impression management scale of Bolino and Turnley[21]. This scale was designed and extensively tested to measure the impression management tactics identified by Jones and Pittman[22]. Respondents were asked how accurate statements were in describing their behaviors in a social setting. They could indicate their answer on a 5 point scale, ranging from “very inaccurate” to “very accurate”.

Defensive impression management behavior was measured, using the 4 items of impression management that was developed by Tsai, et al [23] in their research on defensive impression management tactics in job interviews. Respondents were asked how accurate statements were in describing their behaviors in a social setting. They could indicate their answer on a 5 point scale, ranging from very inaccurate to very accurate.

III. Results

[Figures 1-3] below represents the results for this study. The vertical line on the bar chart represents the percentage of the points scored by respondent per country, while the horizontal line represents the research questions.

1. Self promotion impression management behaviors

Statement 1	Make others aware of your talents or qualifications,
Statement 2	Make others aware of your unique skills,
Statement 3	Let others know how valuable you are to them or to an organization,
Statement 4	Talk proudly about past accomplishments and fulfillments,

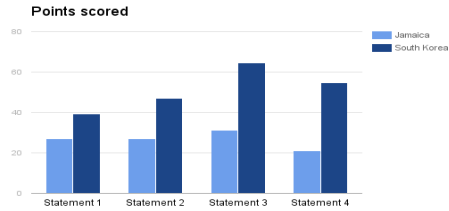


Figure 1. Self Promotion IM behaviors

The results showed that a higher percentage of South Korean engages in self promoting impression management behaviors more than their Jamaican counterpart.

2. Ingratiation behaviors impression management behaviors

Statement 1	Praise others for their efforts so that they will consider you a nice person
Statement 2	Compliment others so they will see you as likeable
Statement 3	Do personal favors to show that you are friendly
Statement 4	Take interest in others personal lives,

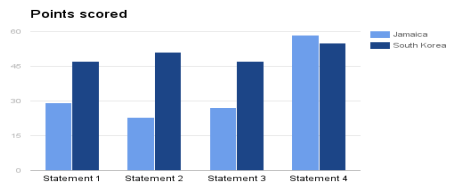


Figure 2. Ingratiation IM behaviors

For ingratiation, except for statement 4 (take interest in others personal lives) where Jamaica scored a higher percentage than South Korea, results also showed that South Korean will engage in ingratiating impression management behaviors more than Jamaicans.

3. Defensive impression management behaviors

Statement 1	Make justification when there is a negative outcome
Statement 2	Apologize for failures,
Statement 3	Give excuses for negative experiences,
Statement 4	Defend yourself for negative experiences,

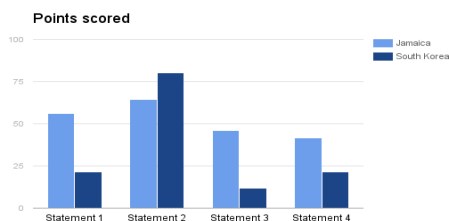


Figure 3. Defensive IM behaviors

Lastly, for defensive impression management behaviors, except for statement 2 (apologize for failures) where South Korea recorded a higher percentage than Jamaica, result showed that Jamaicans will engage in defensive impression management behaviors more than South Koreans.

IV. Discussion

Based on existing work on culture and impression management behaviors, it was expected that individuals from different cultural background would vary in their choice and frequency of impression management behaviors. In this study, the differences and similarities in the use of impression management behavior between Jamaica and South Korea were highlighted.

This research aimed to answer the question, “Does the use of impression management behavior differ based on the differences in culture?” Based on the results, there are some meaningful issues for further discussion. Especially in regards to the cultural

dimension of high/ low power distance and the choice of impression management behaviors used by both countries. First, previous researchers suggested that individuals from high power distance cultures will more likely accept self promotion impression management behavior than those of low power distance cultures. In high power distance culture, like South Korea, people expects their leader or people in a higher position than them to act in a privileged way and people are expected to display respect for those of higher status. Moreover, South Korea, being a slightly hierarchical society[3], accepts a system that differentiates and emphasizes differences in rank, therefore the use of self promotion is highly tolerated. Jamaica, a low power distance culture, on the other hand, the use of self promotion is usually seen as boasting about one’s accomplishments and that is not readily accepted. Secondly, a high power distance culture is governed by principles that are designed to enhance the power of those in authority. The teaching of Confucius may give a better understanding as to why these views are held in Asian cultures. According to the teachings, society is by nature, based on unequal relationships. The five basic relationships (wu lun) put people at appropriate levels: ruler/subject, father/son, older brother/younger brother, husband/wife and older friend/younger friend. In each case, the lesser member is expected to show obedience; respect and loyalty to those in authority. An expected way of accomplishing this expectation is through the use of ingratiation[24]. South Korea therefore will be more inclined to do what is expected of them, especially if it is from those who is considered to be in authority, including personal favors. It is therefore evident why South Koreans recorded higher use of ingratiating impression management behavior than Jamaicans, whose culture is characterized by the assumption that

everyone in society is considered equal. One finding that needs mentioning is that of the ingratiating behavior “take an interest in others personal lives” where Jamaica recorded a slightly higher score than South Korea. One explanation for this unexpected findings is that given the belief in high power distance between individuals and those in authority, for South Koreans, taking interest in others personal lives, may seem to somewhat cross the line. Jamaica, on the other hand, whereas the use of flattery, favors etc may seem somewhat unacceptable for Jamaicans, given the low power distance culture and the fact that relationship with those in authority is usually informal, taking an interest in others personal lives is not considered an issue. Thirdly, the South Korean cultural value of respecting those in authority plus the discouragement of open disagreement and confrontation may explain why the use of defensive strategies such as justification and excuses are not easily used but the use of apologies are easily used, compared to their Jamaican counterpart, where communication is direct and participative.

Following the implication of social role theory for impression management, it is expected that individuals may behave differently and be expected to behave in a certain manner based on their culture. Social roles impact the cultural use of impression management because they establish normative expectations for behavior. For example, individuals in high power distance cultures are expected to engage in impression management behaviors that regard loyalty, obedience and respect to those who are in authority.

V. Conclusion

The current study explores the use of impression management between two cultures: Jamaica and

South Korea. The study relies primarily on qualitative methods to obtain the recorded results.

This research argued that the differences in culture based on Hofstede’s study on national cultural dimensions will determine the type of impression management behavior that one uses. Although this research has limitations, it shed some light on the use of impression management behavior differences between the two countries.

The results have some implications, especially in environments in which Jamaican and South Koreans work and interact with each other. Engaging in impression management behavior towards those in similar cultural cluster, may be seen as a normal and beneficial task, since based on societal norms, individuals belonging to the same culture will exhibit similar behavior. Difficulties and misunderstanding may however arise when engaging in impression management behavior across cultures, since what may be seen as acceptable in one culture may not be the same for another. Firstly the impact of globalization has caused expatriates living in both countries. An expatriate is a professional/managerial employee moved from country to, and for employment in another country, [25]. Unfortunately, many expatriates are often not prepared for the changes in culture in the host country, and this often have a negative effect on the relationship between the expatriate and the host country nationals. Thus, having a negative effect on the organizational performance. Learning about one’s host country uses of IM can decrease this negativity. When the organization is in a new country, impression management consistent with the local culture can benefit expatriates achievement, the organization performance plus increase their likeability amongst employees from the host culture. Implications for this research will not only be beneficial to expatriates but

also to students as well as visitors who have to interact and communicate with others that are from a different cultural background.

We hope that the present findings stimulate further research to advance understanding of the use of impression management behavior between Jamaica and South Korea.

Limitation of study

Despite a few important findings mentioned above, we admit that this study has several limitations. Firstly, since the data for this research was collected through online questionnaire survey, social desirable response bias is a possibility in this survey research, especially since participants were required to generalize retrospectively about their behavior. Furthermore, individuals may provide socially desirable responses which would be consistent to managing one's own image. Secondly instead of just university students and working adults. Since the research is a cross cultural study, It would have been worthwhile to draw samples from a more diverse population from both countries. Thirdly, the impression-management scale used in this study captures the impression management attempts that individuals make generally and not impression management attempts geared towards a specific individual. Moreover, since the theory suggests that people may alter their strategies based on their specific target, investigating whether different results are obtained if target specific relationships are examined would give a clearer outcome. Finally, since the impression management scale was developed in a western culture, it may have some bias towards Asian cultures.

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