

**Identifying the mental patterns of students in applying the
Impression Management tactics by Q method**

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Abstract

The main purpose of this research is to identify the prominent behaviors of impression management of students in the academic setting and classify students based on their mental patterns in applying impression management behaviors and tactics and describe and interpret each pattern. In this study by using the Q methodology, first the behaviors involved in impression management in the educational setting were identified and the mental patterns of different students based on the priorities of the application of their impression management tactics was identified and described. This research is practical based on purpose. It is also exploratory in the nature of research and descriptive-survey in terms of data collection. The data of this research are mixed (combined or quantitative-qualitative). The qualitative part of this research was carried out through unstructured interviews with purposeful sampling in order to provide a space for discourse and Q sample design; 62 statements and 33 items Received. The quantitative part of this study was performed to identify and categorize mental patterns using Q-factor analysis. The results of this study indicated that there are five main mental patterns in the application of illustration management tactics called hyperactives, oblivious, law-abidings, opportunistics, and clevers among the students studied. These five groups covered about 85% of the total variance. One of the best methods is improving the students' impressiom behaviors by teaching and promoting culture through some programs and socio-cultural events with the aim of reducing violent and hostile behaviors and creating a happy atmosphere in the university.

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Introduction

The university is one of the most important educational and training organizations in the country, and identifying the behaviors, relationships, and types of mental and behavioral patterns of students in communication is key to making management decisions and analyzing and understanding the prevailing atmosphere of this important institution. In the author's view, identifying behaviors and goals of university stakeholders with the aim of adopting approaches, decisions, and management policies that are appropriate for the unique behavioral-communicative characteristics of the target population is one of the requirements for increasing scientific and ethical flourishing and improving the university environment. Students are one of the main stakeholders of the university, and the main focus of this research is to identify the behavioral-communicative mental patterns of various students in the framework of impression management theory. In this study, we aim to use Q methodology to first identify impression management behaviors in the educational environment, and then based on the priorities of using impression management tactics, identify, categorize, and describe the mental patterns of different students in terms of age, gender, field of study, level of education, marital status, and employment. This research helps to gain a deep understanding of students and their communication behaviors. The results of this research can help provide suggestions for improving the university environment and promoting student socialization. Additionally, this research provides a basis for conducting further and deeper studies in the field of impression management in universities or other organizations.

The key questions of this research are:

- 1) What are the most important student behaviors carried out for impression management purposes in the university?
- 2) Based on students' mental patterns in impression management, how can they be divided into different categories?
- 3) What are the most important priorities in using impression management tactics in each mental pattern?

Pour (2022) carried out a research entitled "Analysis of the lived experience of professors of Ferdowsi University of Mashhad on the disrespectful behavior of students" with the aim of analyzing the disrespectful behavior of students towards professors and investigating its causes and identified some prominent behaviors.

Cetin (2020) investigated the relationship between image management and attitude among students. The results indicated that there is a positive, moderate and significant relationship between "positive approach" towards attitude and "self-promotion" tactic in imaging

management. The correlation between "negative approach" towards attitude and "intimidation" tactic in image management is positive, strong and meaningful.

Methodology

The choice of methodology for any research depends on the topic under study and the research questions of that research. In this research, the Q method, which is considered one of the mixed methods, is the basis of the work.

Q methodology is used to investigate and analyze people's mentality. By using the Q method, it is possible to make a typology of these mentalities and views (Brown, 1993).

her first collects various opinions and mentalities regarding the issue in question and then categorizes the participants based on their opinions and information (McKeown & Thomas, 1988).

This research is based on the purpose of applied research. It is also exploratory in nature and descriptive-survey in terms of data. Also, this research is one of the mixed researches (combined or quantitative-qualitative).

In this research, in order to increase the validity of the content and the comprehensiveness of the expressions, the research literature and previous theories about the management of visualization were used to compare the dimensions expressed in the theories, the comprehensiveness of the Q sample expressions and its validity were investigated. Using the theory of Jones and Pittman (1982), the similarity of Q's sample expressions with the five categories of impression management tactics described in the theory was investigated, and it can be said that Q's sample expressions, according to the similarities with Jones and Pittman's theory, It has good comprehensiveness. This will increase the comprehensiveness and validity of Q's sample expressions to an acceptable level, and as much as possible.

In this research, Cronbach's alpha test was used to check the reliability of participants' answers. According to the obtained statistical data, Cronbach's alpha has been calculated and the obtained number of 0.941 confirms the high reliability of the research.results.

Results

In this part, the information obtained from the scoring method of the participants was recorded in a special table and after that, the data was entered into the SPSS version 16 software and with the help of factor analysis, the participants' mentalities were discovered and categorized. and the objectives of the research were met.

In Q's factor analysis section, we identify and categorize similar mentalities. The basis of Q factor analysis is the correlation between people. In Q factor analysis, unlike other statistical methods, people are categorized instead of variables, but tactically, there is no difference between them (Khoshgouanfard, 2006, 67-68).

Based on the prioritization of Q samples by the participants, SPSS software has identified five factors (with specific values above 1) and these five cover about 85% of the variance.

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gives The highest percentage of explained variance is equal to the value of 27.462% and is related to factor 1. The percentage of variance of the second, third, fourth and fifth factors is 20.825, 15.563, 10.828 and 10.321%, respectively.

Participants No. 12, 2, 1, 21, 10, 15, 4 and 11 with the first mental model and participants No. 24, 6, 23, 14, 13, 29 and 9 with the second mental model. and participants No. 5, 26, 8, 17, 19 and 20 with the third mental model and participants No. 18, 25, 3, 22 and 28 with the fourth mental model and participants No. 30, 16, 27 and 7 are identified with the fifth mental model.

Discussion and conclusion

The first mental model: It seems that this group of people likes to use the "Exemplification" tactic more. They also like to highlight their skills, talents, and competencies to others, or in other words, use the "self-promotion" tactic. These people are against the tactics of "intimidation" and putting pressure on others

The second mental model: It seems that this group of people likes to try to attract approval and attention to themselves by being fat-tongued or doing things that are liked by their audience. They use the "Ingratiation" tactic to create their desired impression. Similarly, they use the tactic of "Supplication".

The third mental model: it seems that most of the statements that are scored indicate the high tendency of these people to use tactics of intimidation, self-promotion, Supplication, and "using rules" and regulations with the purpose of putting pressure on professors" is the most important behavior in building their desired impression.

The fourth mental pattern: In this mental pattern, there is a high tendency to use the "self-indulgence" tactic. Likewise, the tactics of "self-promotion" and "attracting support" are also among the tactics of impression management that are liked by this mental model.

The fifth mental pattern: It can be said that in this mental pattern, there is a high tendency to use the tactics of "Exemplification" and "Ingratiation". In the same way, "intimidation" tactics are also one of the favorite impression management tactics of this mental model.

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