

## **Effect of Self-Promotion, Exemplification, and Ingratiation on the Job Performance of Academics in Selected Universities in Edo State**

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| <b>ABSTRACT</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <b>ARTICLE DETAILS</b>                                                                                                                                  |
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| <p>The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of self-promotion, ingratiation, and exemplification on the job performance of lecturers in Universities in Edo State. The study employed a correlational survey research design. Its population comprised 3,002 academic staff in the selected Universities. The questionnaire served as the primary research instrument. Data collected from the online questionnaire were analysed by descriptive statistics (such as mean, standard deviation, and percentages) and inferential statistics through the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). It revealed that there was a positive and significant relationship between self-promotion and job performance of the academics; there was a negative and non-significant relationship between ingratiation and job performance of the academics; there was a positive and significant relationship between exemplification and job performance of the academics. It concluded that there was a need for the university to emphasise the issues that significantly impact the job performance of academics. Recommendations such as professional development programmes, ethical and constructive impression management behaviours, and regular feedback mechanisms, among others, were provided.</p> <p><b>KEYWORDS:</b> Self-Promotion, Exemplification, Ingratiation, Lecturers, Job Performance.</p> | <p><b>Published On:</b><br/><b>25 September 2025</b></p> <p><b>Available on:</b><br/><b><a href="https://ijiissh.com/">https://ijiissh.com/</a></b></p> |

### **INTRODUCTION**

University lecturers are charged with multiple responsibilities, which include educating students, contributing to the realms of academic research and scholarship, and improving society (Rabo, 2022; Wahyudi, 2022; Edobor & Akenzua, 2023). Their effectiveness in fulfilling these responsibilities is paramount, as it directly reverberates across the educational landscape, affecting the students, the progression of knowledge, and the overall development of the society (Wahyudi, 2022). The job performance of a lecturer is fundamentally defined by the extent to which they execute their pedagogic duties, which encompass not only the dissemination of knowledge but also the transformation of their students into individuals who hold the potential to contribute significantly to both their communities and society at large (Owan, 2019). Edobor and Akenzua (2023) define the job performance of lecturers as encompassing effective pedagogy, the transformation of students into well-rounded individuals, and the cultivation of future contributors to their communities and society. The emphasis is on the transformative role of lecturers in shaping students' intellectual and personal development, inspiring them, and instilling values and social responsibility. This transformation extends beyond the classroom and aims to produce individuals who can contribute to their communities and society by nurturing essential skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and effective communication for societal progress (Rabo, 2022).

To excel in their roles, lecturers must develop effective relationships with students and their colleagues (Egbokhan, 2016; Rabo, 2022). This relationship is embedded in the impression they create within the institution (Lind, 2022). Scholars contend that the impressions which individuals create can wield considerable influence over their engagement in organisational activities, underscoring the pivotal role of impression management in organisational settings (Dziedzic & Jastrzębowska, 2022; Saripek, Fisekcioglu, & Caglayan, 2023).

Impression management revolves around the purposeful actions taken by individuals to direct or shape the perceptions others hold of them (Vanhaltren & Peter, 2019; Dziedzic & Jastrzębowska, 2022).

Within the academic sphere, university lecturers demonstrate a repertoire of impression management behaviours to navigate their professional interactions. The behaviours include self-promotion, ingratiation, and exemplification (Chaubey & Kandpal, 2017; Vanhaltren & Peter, 2019). Self-promotion is a deliberate act to accentuate one's strengths, accomplishments, and competencies, thereby fostering a positive image (Gross, Debus, Ingold, & Kleinmann, 2021; Dziedzic & Jastrzębowska, 2022). Ingratiation involves the art of seeking favour and approval through affability, support, and an affiliative approach. Exemplification unfolds

when individuals exemplify values and behaviours associated with unwavering commitment, dedication, and self-sacrifice to project a laudable image.

These behaviours can collectively influence the dynamics of lecturer interactions and their effectiveness within the academic institution. Impression management thus holds the potential to significantly impact the job performance of lecturers (Khisar, Iqbal, Khalid, Rasheed, & Akhtar, 2021; Tunio, Agha, Salman, Ullah, & Nisar, 2021). These behaviours often affect how they interact with their colleagues, students, and other aspects of the job (Dziedzic & Jastrzębowska, 2022). Some lecturers assume an air of superiority, proudly showcasing their abilities and accomplishments to bolster their professional image. In contrast, others adopt a more amiable and supportive demeanour, striving to build positive relationships with their peers and students. Some present themselves as highly committed and dedicated professionals, while another category tends to portray vulnerability and dependence, seeking support and assistance from their colleagues or the institution's management (Moe & Katz, 2020; Khisar et al., 2021).

Although existing research indicates that these impression management actions can produce both positive and negative outcomes (Bolino et al., 2016; De Silva, 2022; Li, Brown, & Hawe, 2023; Saripek et al., 2023), the majority of these studies have been conducted in countries other than Nigeria. The researcher is not aware of any study that has been done on what kind of connection exists between the various impressions that academics display and their performance within Nigeria, with specific emphasis on Edo State. This study aimed to address this research gap by exploring how impression management influences the job performance of academics in chosen universities in Edo State. It thus examines the correlation among self-promotion, ingratiation, exemplification, and the job performance of academics in Edo State universities.

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### Social Exchange Theory

The "Social Exchange Theory" was developed by sociologists. Homans in the early 1960s, as cited by Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005). Building on the work of behavioural psychology and economic principles, the theory explains social behaviour through the lens of rational choice and the exchange of resources.

As the theory explains, individuals participate in social interactions with the anticipation of receiving rewards or facing consequences (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Cropanzano, Anthony, Daniels, & Hall, 2017). In the context of student-lecturer dyadic relationships, or lecturer-lecturer relationships. Students and lecturers may engage in a reciprocal exchange of resources. Students invest time and effort in learning, while lecturers provide knowledge, guidance, and evaluation. The interactions are driven by the perceived benefits and costs, shaping the dynamics of the relationship.

The Social Exchange Theory's strength lies in its capacity to elucidate relationship dynamics through the lens of rational decision-making, highlighting the significance of mutual advantage and shedding light on the reasons behind individuals' choices in interactions (Cropanzano et al., 2017). Nevertheless, critics contend that it oversimplifies intricate social relationships by portraying them as economic transactions (Mitchell, Cropanzano, & Quisenberry, 2012). Moreover, it may not comprehensively encompass the emotional or psychological dimensions inherent in relationships (Mitchell et al., 2012). Impression management, originating from social psychology, refers to the intentional or unintentional efforts to manipulate how others perceive oneself. In the realm of student-lecturer relationships, both students and lecturers may employ impression management to shape the impressions they create on each other. Students might project an image of attentiveness and diligence, hoping to garner positive feedback and grades. Lecturers, on the other hand, may strategically present themselves as knowledgeable and approachable, aiming to cultivate a positive and conducive learning atmosphere.

#### Transformational Leadership Theory

First presented by James MacGregor Burns in 1978, the Transformational Leadership Theory emphasises how leaders can inspire and motivate their subordinates to achieve extraordinary results (Kwan, 2020). The idea is based on a number of fundamental presumptions. According to this theory, charismatic and visionary leaders who appeal to higher-order needs and values can inspire their followers (Ladkin & Patrick, 2023). These leaders pique followers' intellectual curiosity, which fosters creativity and imaginative thinking. Additionally, they promote individualised consideration by recognising and dealing with the distinct requirements and possibilities of every follower (Asbari, Santoso, & Prasetya, 2020; Ladkin & Patrick, 2023).

One of the strengths of the transformational leadership theory is its practical relevance in leadership and organisational settings (Asbari et al., 2020). It provides an outline for understanding how leadership can have a significant impact on the productivity and motivation of its followers, which ultimately improves organisational outcomes. The theory has been widely applied in leadership development and management practices, contributing to effective leadership strategies and improved organisational cultures (Saad, 2021).

However, the theory also has limitations. One weakness is that it may overemphasise the role of leaders and charisma, potentially neglecting the importance of other organisational and contextual factors that influence leadership effectiveness. Additionally, the theory's focus on individualised consideration may be challenging to implement in large organisations with numerous followers, raising questions about its scalability.

In a contemporary study on impression management, the Transformational Leadership Theory can be applied to examine how leaders' behaviours and characteristics impact the impression management strategies of their followers. Transformational leaders, with their emphasis on charisma and inspiration, may influence their followers' self-presentation and impression management behaviours. Followers who are inspired by transformational leaders may be more motivated to project a positive image and align with the leader's vision. This theory can help researchers understand the dynamics of leadership and impression management in organisational contexts, shedding light on how transformational leadership can influence the strategies used by followers to manage their impressions effectively.

### **HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT**

#### **Self-promotion and Job Performance**

Self-promotion focuses on highlighting one's own achievements, skills, and positive qualities to establish credibility and competence (Takpor & Ogoanah, 2020; Merchers et al., 2020). Levashina, Hartwell, Morgeson, and Campion (2014) provide a comprehensive description of self-promotion as a deliberate and purposeful behaviour that involves the active presentation of one's accomplishments, expertise, knowledge, and other positive qualities. This view implies that people who promote themselves are, in essence, making a deliberate attempt to draw attention to their accomplishments and skills, so advertise their advantages to others in their immediate vicinity. Melchers et al. (2020) looked at how self-promotion affected interview performance. The purpose of the study was to determine whether self-promotion is associated with variations in interviewee performance and whether there is inter-individual variation in the identification of accomplishment criteria. SEM was the methodology used, and the participants consisted of 127 German-speaking pupils. The results showed that performance was significantly harmed by self-promotion. It was found that using self-promotion negatively impacted performance, even while it may have positive impacts generally.

Gross, et al. (2021) investigated the relationship between a worker's supervisor-focused self-promotion efficacy and the outcomes of their work grouping. With a representative sample of 195, the research focused on 1,016 workers from industrial companies in Germany and Switzerland to examine the effects of self-promotion among groups of workers. The study used SEM to analyse the collected data using a survey research approach. The findings showed that the relationship between a focal employee's supervisor-focused self-promotion and the supervisor's evaluation of the focal worker's job performance is moderated by the self-promotion atmosphere within the workplace group. The result reached was that taking into account the self-promotion environment improves comprehension of the function of self-promotion for both individuals and work groups.

According to Dziedzic and Jastrzębowska (2022), impression management through academic lectures is studied by both the students and the lecturers. The purpose of the study was to investigate how faculty scholars' opinions and student impression handling are influenced by various elements. Using a correlational research approach, the study included 207 participants in total, comprising 59 instructors and 149 students from Polish universities. Online surveys were used for data gathering. The findings showed a relationship between a scientist's reputation in the field, which includes things like publications, expert activities, and scientific accomplishments, and the impression the scientist gives off. The results showed a lower positive link between prestige and the researcher's overall image, and a strong, albeit moderate, positive association between prestige and image construction. On the other hand, there was a somewhat favourable correlation between picture generation and the researcher's reputation. The inference made was that greater ratings of a scientist's reputation are associated with both the success of image building and the scientist's overall perception.

Based on the above, a null hypothesis is proposed as follows: Self-promotion has no significant relationship with the job performance of academics

#### **Ingratiation and Job Performance**

Ingratiation involves efforts to make oneself more likeable and gain favour with others. Cialdini and Cialdini (2007) describe ingratiation as the act of people trying to get others to like them by complimenting them, expressing admiration, or engaging in behaviours that enhance their perceived similarity to the target person. They suggest that when people engage in ingratiation, they create a sense of connection and goodwill, making it more likely that the target person will respond positively in return. The purpose is to manipulate or shape someone else's perception of that person. Ingratiation can involve offering compliments, displaying agreeable behaviour, or demonstrating genuine interest in the opinions and concerns of others. It can be achieved through compliments, flattery, agreeableness, and expressions of warmth and friendliness (Takpor & Ogoanah, 2020; Yan, Xie, Zhao, Zhang, Bashir, & Liu, 2020).

A study on the effect of impression-management strategies on supervisor assessments of organisational citizenship behaviour was carried out by Bolino et al. in 2006. The purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of tactics for managing impressions on OCB supervisor ratings. The study, which took the form of a survey, included 122 workers in Spanish manufacturing companies. The approach that was selected was SEM. The findings indicated that supervisor-focused impression management strategies had a favourable link with OCB ratings, whereas job-focused strategies showed a negative correlation with these assessments. Furthermore, it was discovered that good civic behaviours were favourably correlated with supervisor approval of the worker as

well as general evaluations of job performance. The study came to the conclusion that the association between supervisor-focused techniques for managing impressions and the supervisor's assessments of staff acceptance is mediated by OCB ratings.

Wu et al. (2013) investigated flattery in the workplace in relation to the functions of subordinate and supervisor political skills. The sample comprised 640 workers, with 320 individuals each serving as subordinates and supervisors in a large manufacturing company located in Beijing, China. Data collection was conducted through the use of surveys. The results demonstrated that subordinates possessing high political skill are less likely to have their demonstrations of flattery behaviours acknowledged by their supervisors. Conversely, supervisors with high political skill tend to perceive flattery behaviours exhibited by their subordinates. Additionally, the most effective condition for subordinates to conceal flattery from their supervisors occurs when the subordinates are politically astute and the supervisors are not. Furthermore, when supervisors detect flattery behaviours, they tend to assign low ratings to the job performance and promotability of their subordinates. These lower ratings are attributed to the compromised personal reputation of the subordinates resulting from the detected flattery.

Gever and Okoro (2020) examine how the self-presentation tactics employed by Facebook users in Nigeria affect their responses to persuasive political messages. The study examined strategies such as supplication, ingratiation, self-promotion, success, and basking. Utilising an online questionnaire, the research evaluated responses to political messages on Facebook, considering indicators like post engagement (ignoring, viewing, commenting, liking, and sharing). Data analysis involved methods such as simple percentages, mean and standard deviation, weighted mean, correlation, Chi-Square tests, and multiple regression. Findings suggested that ingratiation has a positive, albeit non-significant, predictive relationship with responses to persuasive messages. Additionally, a significant correlation was found between message elements and the reactions of Facebook users, emphasising the influence of the message source on user responses.

Based on the above, a null hypothesis is proposed as follows: Ingratiation has no significant relationship with the job performance of academics

### **Exemplification and Job Performance**

Exemplification is a facet of impression management that involves portraying oneself as a virtuous, dedicated, or morally upright individual, often through self-sacrifice or going above and beyond what is expected. According to Long (2017, p.2), "the dimension that would include employees managing appearances by showing up to work early and leaving late, or limiting vacations and then being accessible when taking one, has been labelled exemplification". This suggests that exemplification involves demonstrating moral values, dedication, and a strong work ethic to create a positive image. This can include setting high standards for oneself and adhering to them as a way of earning respect and admiration. Researchers have also attributed exemplification to organisational citizenship behaviour. They argue that exemplifiers often demonstrate organisational citizenship behaviour by playing the function of organisational citizens involves supportive individuals, engaging in regular volunteering, expressing their opinions, and exceeding the typical expectations set by their organisations (Bolino & Turnley, 2012; Long, 2017).

Moe and Katz (2020) examined the connection between teacher self-compassion and the adoption of autonomy-supportive and structuring motivating styles, as opposed to de-motivating, controlling and chaotic styles. The study also explored the potential mediating roles of teacher psychological need satisfaction and burnout. Utilising a survey research design, the research involved 318 teachers in Italy as participants. Self-report questionnaires were employed to evaluate self-compassion, need satisfaction, burnout, and the use of (de)motivating teaching styles. The results indicated a positive correlation between teachers' self-compassion levels and higher ratings of need satisfaction, personal accomplishment, as well as the implementation of autonomy-supportive and structuring motivating styles. Conversely, a greater inclination toward self-derogation among teachers was associated with heightened need frustration, burnout, and the adoption of controlling and chaotic motivating styles.

Khizar et al (2021) investigated the link between students' impression management and academic performance through two studies. Study 1 involved 311 graduate students, revealing that various impression management tactics and styles were employed in interactions with teachers and peers. Exemplification and self-promotion tactics, along with an authentic acting style, were positively associated with academic performance measured by GPA. In Study 2, 183 postgraduate research students and their supervisors were examined, showing that self-promotion and exemplification tactics had a positive connection with supervisor-rated performance in terms of competence. Study 2 also found that the supervisor's perceptions of deceitfulness played a moderating role in the relationship between student impression management and positive outcomes, such as perceived competence and supervisor-rated performance. Specifically, these relationships were weaker when the supervisor perceived higher deceitfulness in the impression manager compared to when deceitfulness was perceived as lower.

Based on the above, a null hypothesis is proposed as follows: Exemplification has no significant relationship with the job performance of academics

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

The study employed a correlational survey research design to examine the associations among the variables.

## Effect of Self-Promotion, Exemplification, and Ingratiation on the Job Performance of Academics in Selected Universities in Edo State

**Population of the Study:** The study targets academic staff in selected public and private universities in Edo State, totalling seven accredited Universities. Among the seven universities in Edo State, three are public universities, and the remaining four are private. To ensure an unbiased selection process, the universities were arranged based on their founding years. The criterion for inclusion in the study involved selecting the oldest public and private Universities. Consequently, the University of Benin (UNIBEN) and Ambrose Alli University (AAU) were selected under the public schools category, while the Igbinedion University (IU) and Benson Idahosa University (BIU) were selected under the private universities category.

Data retrieved from the registries of the selected universities as of October 2023 revealed that there were 3,002 academic staff in the Universities. Table 1 shows the breakdown of the universities.

**Table 1: Academic Staff in Selected Universities in Edo State**

| S/N                  | Universities              | Academic staff     |
|----------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
|                      | Public Universities       |                    |
| 1                    | University of Benin       | 1949               |
| 2                    | Ambrose Alli University   | 674                |
| <b>Total</b>         |                           | <b>2623</b>        |
| Private Universities |                           |                    |
| 3                    | Igbinedion University     | 188                |
| 4                    | Benson Idahosa University | 191                |
| <b>Total</b>         |                           | <b>379</b>         |
| <b>Total</b>         |                           | <b><u>3002</u></b> |

**Source:** Registries (2023)

From Table 1 above, the total number of academic staff in the selected public universities was 2,623, while the total number of academic staff in the selected private universities was 379. Hence, 3,002 academic staff made up the study's population

**Sample Size:** To determine the sample size for the study, the researchers employed the Yamane (1967) formula. This formula is a statistical method used to calculate an appropriate sample size based on the total population. By applying this formula, the researchers aimed to ensure that their selected sample would be representative and provide reliable insights for their research objectives.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where: n = Sample size =?

N = population figure = 3002

e = level of significance = 0.05

$$n = \frac{3002}{1 + (3002 \times 0.05^2)}$$

$$= \frac{3002}{1 + 7.505}$$

$$= \frac{3002}{8.505}$$

$$n = 352$$

The sample size is therefore 352.

To determine the sample size in each university, the percentage contribution of the universities to the sample size was computed as follows:

$$\text{Uniben} = \frac{1949}{3002} \times 352 = 229$$

$$\text{AAU} = \frac{674}{3002} \times 352 = 79$$

$$\text{IU} = \frac{188}{3002} \times 352 = 22$$

$$\text{BIU} = \frac{191}{3002} \times 352 = 22$$

Based on the above computation, 229, 79, 22 and 22 academic staff were sampled from Uniben, AAU, IU, and BIU, respectively.

**Sampling Technique:** In order to reduce delay in the collection of data, the convenience sampling method was adopted. This involved the selection of respondents based on their easy accessibility and availability to the researcher. However, the respondents were accessed based on the quota that was allocated to each of the universities.

## Effect of Self-Promotion, Exemplification, and Ingratiation on the Job Performance of Academics in Selected Universities in Edo State

**Research Instrument:** The research instrument (that is, the questionnaire) is divided into 2 sections. Section A captures demographic characteristics, while Section B captures both the independent and dependent variables (i.e., impression management and job performance). The respondents were to indicate the extent to which they are in agreement or disagree with the statements. The questionnaire is structured on a 5-point Likert scale measurement, which shows strongly agree (5), agree (4), Undecided (3), disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1).

**Reliability of the Study:** The reliability of the study was assessed using Cronbach's alpha reliability test. First, a pilot survey will be conducted in which 35 copies of the questionnaire will be administered to some lecturers in the selected schools. Second, the copies of the questionnaire were retrieved, coded and subjected to a Cronbach alpha reliability test using the statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS). The results will be displayed in Table 2 below. Cronbach's alpha reliability values were deemed reliable at 70% or 0.7.

**Table 2: Reliability Test Results**

| S/N | Variables       | Number of items | Cronbach's alpha value |
|-----|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| 1   | Self-promotion  | 4               | 0.755                  |
| 2   | Exemplification | 4               | 0.710                  |
| 3   | Ingratiation    | 4               | 0.731                  |
| 4   | Job performance | 4               | 0.758                  |

**Source:** Researcher's fieldwork (2024).

**Method of Data Analysis:** The information gathered through the online survey underwent analysis using SPSS.

## RESULTS

The targeted sample size of the study was 352, but 288 responses were retrieved from the online questionnaire that was administered. This chapter shows the analysis of the collected data. It begins with a description of the demographic characteristics of the respondents, as well as the variables. Then it presents results from structural equation modelling, tests the formulated hypotheses, and discusses the findings.

**Table 3: Demographic Profile of Respondents**

| S/N | Variable              | Attribute           | Frequency | Percent |
|-----|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------|---------|
| 1   | Gender                | Male                | 154       | 53.5    |
|     |                       | Female              | 134       | 46.5    |
|     |                       | Total               | 288       | 100.0   |
| 2   | Age                   | 16-35               | 18        | 6.3     |
|     |                       | 36-55               | 210       | 72.9    |
|     |                       | 56 and above        | 60        | 20.8    |
|     |                       | Total               | 288       | 100.0   |
| 3   | Highest Qualification | Master's Degree     | 181       | 62.8    |
|     |                       | Doctorate Degree    | 107       | 37.1    |
|     |                       | Total               | 288       | 100.0   |
| 4   | Status                | Professor           | 15        | 5.2     |
|     |                       | Associate Professor | 34        | 11.8    |
|     |                       | Senior Lecturer     | 48        | 16.7    |
|     |                       | Lecturer I          | 140       | 48.6    |
|     |                       | Lecturer II         | 46        | 16.0    |
|     |                       | Assistant Lecturer  | 5         | 1.7     |
|     |                       | Total               | 288       | 100.0   |

**Source:** Fieldwork (2024)

**Gender:** The gender distribution presented indicates that, within the studied population, there were 154 male lecturers, constituting 53.5% of the total, and 134 female participants, accounting for 46.5%. This distribution suggests a slight majority of male lecturers in the sample. The percentage breakdown provides insights into the gender composition of the population under consideration.

**Age:** The age distribution among the sampled lecturers indicates a diverse representation across different age groups. The majority of the lecturers fall within the age range of 36-55, constituting 72.9% of the sample, suggesting a significant proportion of mid-career professionals. Meanwhile, a smaller percentage, 6.3%, belongs to the 16-35 age group, possibly reflecting early-career or entry-level lecturers, while 20.8% are 56 years and above, representing a cohort of more experienced and senior academics. This

## Effect of Self-Promotion, Exemplification, and Ingratiation on the Job Performance of Academics in Selected Universities in Edo State

distribution implies a balanced mix of junior, mid-level, and senior lecturers within the sampled population. Understanding this age diversity is crucial for interpreting study findings, as different career stages may influence the dynamics of impression management and its potential impact on job performance among lecturers in the academic context.

**Qualification:** The qualification distribution among the lecturers reveals that a significant majority, comprising 62.8% of the sample, holds a Master's Degree, while 37.1% have attained a Doctorate Degree. This distribution suggests a prevalence of lecturers with Master's Degrees within the studied population. The higher proportion of Master's Degree holders may indicate a mix of early-career and mid-career academics, as this degree is often a prerequisite for entry into academic positions. On the other hand, the presence of 37.1% of lecturers with Doctorate Degrees reflects a substantial number of individuals with advanced academic qualifications, likely representing senior faculty members or those specialising in research-oriented roles. Understanding the distribution of qualifications is essential for contextualising the findings of the study, as academic rank and research expertise may vary across different qualification levels, potentially influencing impression management behaviours and their impact on job performance.

**Status:** The status distribution among the lecturers illustrates the hierarchical positioning within the academic ranks. Among the sampled lecturers, the majority, constituting 48.6%, hold the position of Lecturer I, indicating a predominant presence of early to mid-career academics. Additionally, 16.7% are Senior Lecturers, suggesting a significant representation of mid-level faculty members with a higher level of experience and expertise. The distribution further reveals that 11.8% hold the rank of Associate Professor, signifying a notable proportion of academics with a more advanced career status. A smaller percentage, 5.2%, have achieved the status of Professor, reflecting a limited number of individuals at the highest academic rank. Lecturer II and Assistant Lecturer positions constitute 16.0% and 1.7%, respectively, representing mid-level and entry-level academic positions. This distribution highlights the diverse career stages and academic hierarchies within the sampled population, offering valuable insights into the professional composition of the lecturer cohort.

### 4.4 Relationship between Impression Management Tactics and Job Performance

#### 4.4.1 Test of Multicollinearity

To determine whether multicollinearity existed among the independent variables (self-promotion, exemplification, and ingratiation), a Pearson correlation matrix was employed. Table 4 shows the Pearson correlation coefficients.

**Table 4: Pearson Correlation**

|                 |                     | Self-promotion | Exemplification | Ingratiation |
|-----------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Self-promotion  | Pearson Correlation | 1              |                 |              |
|                 | Sig. (2-tailed)     |                |                 |              |
|                 | N                   | 288            |                 |              |
| Exemplification | Pearson Correlation | .403**         | 1               |              |
|                 | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000           |                 |              |
|                 | N                   | 288            | 288             |              |
| Ingratiation    | Pearson Correlation | .045           | .039            | 1            |
|                 | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .451           | .509            |              |
|                 | N                   | 288            | 288             | 288          |

Table 4 shows that there is no multicollinearity in the model, as all the Pearson coefficients were at low and moderate levels, hence none of the values were up to 0.8.

#### Coefficients

**Table 5: Relationship among Impression Management Tactics, Job Performance and Demographic Characteristics**

| Path                              | B     | S.E  | T      | P      |
|-----------------------------------|-------|------|--------|--------|
| Self-promotion → Job performance  | .403  | .032 | 12.441 | .000** |
| Exemplification → Job performance | .352  | .045 | 7.812  | .000** |
| Ingratiation → Job performance    | -.066 | .047 | -1.397 | .164   |
| Significant at **p<0.05           |       |      |        |        |
| R <sup>2</sup> = .658             |       |      |        |        |
| Number of Observations: 288       |       |      |        |        |

## Effect of Self-Promotion, Exemplification, and Ingratiation on the Job Performance of Academics in Selected Universities in Edo State

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The path shows that self-promotion ( $\beta = 0.403$ ,  $t = 12.441$ ,  $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ), and exemplification ( $\beta = 0.352$ ,  $t = 7.812$ ,  $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ), while ingratiation ( $\beta = -0.066$ ,  $t = -1.397$ ,  $p = 0.164 > 0.05$ ) was negative and non-statistically significant with job performance. The R-squared of 0.66 indicates that 66 per cent of changes in job performance were explained by changes in self-promotion, exemplification, and ingratiation.

### TEST OF RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

**H01:** There is no significant relationship between self-promotion and the job performance of academics in Universities in Edo State.

From Table 5, it was revealed that self-promotion had a significant relationship with job performance ( $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ). As a result, the null hypothesis was rejected. Hence, the conclusion was that there is a significant relationship between self-promotion and the job performance of academics in Universities in Edo State.

**H02:** There is no significant relationship between ingratiation and the job performance of academics in Universities in Edo State.

From Table 5, it was revealed that ingratiation had a non-significant relationship with job performance ( $p = 0.164 > 0.05$ ). As a result, the null hypothesis was not rejected. Hence, the conclusion was that there is no significant relationship between ingratiation and the job performance of academics in Universities in Edo State.

**H03:** There is no significant relationship between exemplification and the job performance of academics in Universities in Edo State

From Table 5, it was revealed that exemplification had a significant relationship with job performance ( $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ). As a result, the null hypothesis was rejected. Hence, the conclusion was that there is a significant relationship between ingratiation and the job performance of academics in Universities in Edo State.

### DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study sought to determine the relationship between impression management tactics and the job performance of academics in selected Universities in Edo State. To achieve the aim, it was found that self-promotion was positively and significantly related.

The positive and significant relationship between self-promotion and job performance ( $B = 0.403$ ,  $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ) implies that academics who engage in self-promotion tactics, such as highlighting their achievements and skills, tend to exhibit higher levels of job performance. This suggests that proactive self-promotion may positively influence how academics are perceived, leading to enhanced job effectiveness and productivity. The implications for university academics are that strategically showcasing one's accomplishments and competencies can contribute to professional success, career advancement, and overall effectiveness in their academic roles. The outcome of this study aligns with Dziedzic and Jastrzębowska (2022), who found a positive and significant relationship between self-promotion and performance. It also aligns with Gross et al (2021) that self-promotion contributes to the effectiveness of group outcomes.

Ingratiation's negative and non-significant relationship with job performance ( $\beta = -0.066$ ,  $t = -1.397$ ,  $p = 0.164 > 0.05$ ) suggests that academics who use tactics like flattery or building personal connections may not necessarily experience a significant impact on job performance. This finding implies that ingratiation strategies may not be as effective in enhancing job effectiveness among university academics. The implication for academics is that relying solely on ingratiating behaviours may not contribute significantly to professional success or performance improvement. The results are consistent with Bolino et al (2006), who reveal that ingratiation had a negative relationship with contextual performance. It was also found to be in line with Wu et al (2013), who found that ingratiation was a non-desirable behaviour that was expected from subordinates.

Exemplification, which shows a positive and significant relationship with job performance ( $\beta = 0.352$ ,  $t = 7.812$ ,  $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ), indicates that academics who go above and beyond their expected duties or demonstrate extra effort are likely to achieve higher levels of job performance. This finding suggests that academics who provide concrete examples of their dedication and commitment contribute positively to their overall job effectiveness. The implication for university academics is that investing extra effort and exemplifying a strong work ethic may lead to improved job performance, recognition, and potential career advancement. The results of this study agree with Moe and Katz (2020) that exemplification promotes positive behaviour in the workplace. It is also in tandem with Khizar et al (2021), who found that individuals with exemplification disposition turn out with high performance.

### CONCLUSION

This study sought to address the dearth of research on the relationship between impression management tactics and the job performance of lecturers within the Nigerian context, with a particular focus on Edo State. The findings reveal significant associations between certain impression management tactics, specifically self-promotion, exemplification, and supplication, and the job performance of lecturers in the selected universities. This underscores the importance of understanding how these behaviours may impact professional effectiveness in the academic landscape.

## Effect of Self-Promotion, Exemplification, and Ingratiation on the Job Performance of Academics in Selected Universities in Edo State

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The study's results provide valuable insights for academic institutions and policymakers in Edo State, emphasising the need to recognise and potentially address the influence of impression management on job performance. By understanding the specific tactics that positively relate to performance, such as self-promotion, exemplification, and supplication, universities can develop targeted interventions or training programs to enhance lecturers' professional effectiveness. Also, it is crucial for administrators, policymakers, and academic professionals to look deeper into the factors contributing to the differences in job performance and to consider targeted strategies that address the specific needs and challenges faced by academics in both public and private university settings.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following are recommended:

**Professional Development Programmes:** Implement professional development programmes that focus on enhancing lecturers' awareness and skills in utilising positive impression management tactics. This could include training sessions on effective self-promotion, exemplification, and supplication strategies. By guiding how to employ these behaviours strategically, academic institutions can contribute to the improvement of lecturers' job performance.

**Contextualised Training for Demographic Awareness:** Tailor training programmes to include an awareness of demographic factors and their potential impact on impression management. While the study found that demographic characteristics did not mediate the relationship between impression management and job performance, lecturers need to understand the differences of their diverse audience. Training that promotes cultural competence and sensitivity to demographic differences could enhance communication and effectiveness.

**Institutional Policies on Ethical Impression Management:** Develop and communicate institutional policies that emphasise ethical and constructive impression management behaviours. Encourage a positive and supportive work environment where lecturers feel empowered to showcase their achievements without resorting to negative tactics such as intimidation. Establishing clear guidelines on acceptable behaviour fosters a healthy organisational culture.

**Regular Feedback Mechanisms:** Implement regular performance feedback mechanisms that facilitate open communication between lecturers and their peers, students, and administrators. Constructive feedback can help lecturers refine their impression management strategies, aligning them with institutional expectations and fostering continuous improvement in job performance. Feedback should be specific, timely, and focused on both strengths and areas for development.

#### **Establishment of Peer Support Networks**

Facilitate the creation of peer support networks within academic departments to encourage collaboration and the exchange of best practices in impression management. Establishing a platform for lecturers to share their experiences and insights can foster a sense of community and mutual learning. Peer support networks can serve as valuable forums for discussing effective impression management strategies, enabling lecturers to navigate the complexities of their roles and enhance job performance collectively.

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