

## Impression Management Tactics in Job Interviews among Fresh graduates in Malaysia: A Case Study in a Workplace

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### ABSTRACT

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The job interview is a viable assessment platform for interviewers to determine the viable prospective graduate for job hiring. During such critical meeting point, the fate of fresh graduates is decided by representatives of an organisation on the suitability of an interviewee for the job. Yet many fresh graduates struggle at such entry level gatekeeping to the professional workplace in view of inability to impress the interviewer. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate whether impression management tactics are portrayed by the fresh graduates during job interviews. They were 15 interviewees who participated in the present study. The job interview data from an organisation was analysed qualitatively using impression management tactics (IMTs) theories. The findings show that the interviewees were poor impression management tactics; interviewees indicated lack of self-presentation and exemplification as positive indicators in securing a job. Hence, impression management tactics are essential in job interviews.

**Contribution/Originality:** The paper's primary contribution is finding to Higher Learning Institutions for preparing undergraduates and fresh graduates for job interviews. IMTs is one of the essential factors in job interviews which help candidates to create favourable impressions. IMTs should be integrated in the existing course modules and it has to be taught in colleges or universities towards the end the course.

## 1. Introduction

Prospective employers will normally select the interviewees by evaluating their resumes and considering their credentials and experience in the working environment (Su-Hie, Ernisa, Kee-Man, Jecky & Collin, 2017). Next, the interview is conducted to evaluate the capability of the interviewees with particular focus on the way how they impress and interact. Since the singular aim of the interviewee is to be selected for the job he or she has applied for, the interviewee has to make the needed preparations before attending the interview. The candidate has not only to be knowledgeable about the job being applied for, but also adroit in impression and interaction (Kenayathulla, Ahmad, & Idris, 2019). During the interview, candidates should be provided with adequate time to interact and answer questions from the interviewer clearly and professionally with good proficiency (Krishnan & Srinivass, 2014).

It is common knowledge that interviewees' will generally find it hard to create a favourable impression upon an interviewer. The ability to convince a manager into hiring an individual cannot be equated with achieving the desired profession (Krishnan, Ramalingam, Hee, & Maruthan, 2017). The interview process is more about tailoring one's abilities, experience, outlook, qualities and ideals to the desired job (Foss & Littlejohn, 2008). Although tailoring one's abilities, character and ideals to the desired job will help one in the course of selecting a good job, the initial goal should be to be fully aware of one's abilities and capacity (Macan, 2009).

Impression management tactics (IMT) is an important feature in a job interview in concert with proficiency. Fletcher (1989) and Schneider (1981, p.13) state that "it is only after assessing the candidate on issues such as gender, ethnicity, presentation, cordiality, and general impact, that the final determination is made on the employability of the interviewee". Individuals either intentionally or otherwise generally tends to manage the opinion other people have of them while conversing proficiently (Lievens & Helga, 2008).

The Malaysian National Graduate Employability Blueprint 2015-2025 highlighted that most fresh graduates were not able to impress in job interviews (Ministry of Higher Education of Malaysia [MHEM], 2019). In line with Malaysian National Graduate Employability Blueprint, Ahmed, Hayfaa and Sandra (2019) noted that lacked of impression skills to demonstrate their capabilities in job interviews.

In the hiring process, IMT of the interviewees could result in his/her favour in terms of evaluation by interviewers and result being hired (Kacmar & Delery 1992; Stevens & Kristof, 1995). Turnley (2001) observes that not everyone has the capacity to grasp IMT. The interviewer's IMT could also have an impact on the interviewee. Crant (2006) postulates that a restrictive viewpoint of the interviewee's and interviewer's depictions of a situation can jeopardise the value of IMT. The most significant feature which impacts the evaluation procedure of an interview is the language skills of the interviewees' as it plays an important role in shaping the interviewers' impression of the candidates (Lopez & Fletcher, 2004). Therefore, the present study was aimed to investigate the use of IMTs by the fresh graduates.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Definition of Impression Management Tactics

An independent study of IMT was first undertaken by the sociologist Goffman (1959; 1972). He described the theory of IMT as the thought that persons knowingly control the impressions they express to other individuals in interpersonal communications. He put forward a dramaturgical viewpoint of societal discourse where individuals are construed to be actors who participate in routines in multiple situations, in the presence of an audience, to shape a meaning for the setting.

IMT is construed as an effort to embody precise writing or speaking approach in building an optimistic reflection of oneself to an intended individual (Goffman, 1959; 1972). Schlenker (1995) also indicates that IMT is a conduct which is calculated to be exercised to convince people. If an interviewee depicts an incorrect of impression of himself/herself to the interviewer, the odds of being selected for a job will be diminished.

Table 1: Definitions of IMT

No	Impression Management Tactics	Defintions
1	Self-focused	The focus is on convincing individuals of their speaking abilities in conversations.
2	Self-presentation	This reveals their abilities and produces an optimistic view of the speakers.
3	Exemplifications	This persuades the listener that he/she is an excellent model to other people.
4	Entitlements	When applying entitlements, people claim credit for successful programs, although credit may belong elsewhere. For instance, "Earlier in the week we handled a false fire alarm, and thanks to???"
5	Enhancements	Enhancements point to assertions that the success of a program initiated by the claimant that the impact of a successful program, was better than most individuals might believe. For example, "The kitchen at the firehouse under my charge is very clean resulting 35% less sick days this year."
6	Justifications	This approach implies acknowledging accountability for an unconstructive result or occasion but claims that it is not all that bad. At times this approach is utilised in an attempt to sway the interviewer into believing that he or she would have reacted in s similar way. For instance, "In the previous 2 years, three of my friends have died in fires because there was a record of five fires in the region.
7	Apologies	This approach entails taking accountability for an adverse result or episode as well as acknowledging the adverse inferences of such accountability. It frequently means that the interviewer wishes to compensate any injured party and implies an undertaking to conduct in an appropriate manner henceforth. A sample of an apology would be "Putting on my kit took me 15 more seconds than others last week so I was justly docked a day's salary. I apologised and gave my word that it would not occur again."
8	Defensive tactics	These approaches are utilised for the user to defend or mend his or her impression. Utilising this approach, the interviewee asserts that he or she was not to blame for a

		negative result or Conduct. For example, "Last week 10 people died in a fire, but as I was unwell on that day and stayed home, so I'm not to blame."
9	Other enhancement	This approach envisages a positive appraisal of the interviewer by mollicoddling the interviewer intending to boost the interviewer's confidence. A sample of this would be "I observe you appear to be very fit. Do you exercise frequently?"
10	Opinion conformity	This approach is applied when an interviewee gives ideas, views, or ideals that he or she may plausibly assume is also embraced by the interviewer or if the interviewee relates occurrences that are likely match those of the interviewers. For example, "I consider that all fire-fighters should be very fit physically, which is why I exercise in the gym for 2 hours 6 days a week."
11	Ingratiation tactics	These approaches are meant to induce interpersonal feeling and rapport between the interviewer and the interviewee.
12	Assertive tactics	These approaches are utilised by the interviewee to attain and encourage positive effects by depicting oneself as a distinct person with distinct values, views, wisdom, qualities, or Skills.
13	Overcoming obstacles	This approach concerns the way the interviewee overcomes issues or hurdles encumbering development toward achieving an objective. To apply this approach, the candidate has to demonstrate that an existing impediment could have stalled advancement. For instance, "The firehouse needed to purchase a new fire truck last year, but the government was unable to provide sufficient funds, so I raised sufficient money by organising a fund raising event to acquire two fire trucks."
14	Self-promotion tactics	These approaches are calculated to demonstrate that the candidate has the required attributes for the position, such as proficiency.
15	Specific self-promoting utterances	This approach alludes to assertions that are focused on persuading a target that the candidate has useful attributes or personality. Explicit self-advocating expressions are applied to obtain particular personality characteristics, such as ability or admiration. The candidate attempts to convince others into believing that he or she has broad experience in many fields (e.g., intelligence) or particular abilities (skilled in playing a musical instrument), for instance, "Since the firehouse lost its oldest and most experienced and knowledgeable fire-fighter last year,, many of the junior fire-fighters who previously sought advice from him now approach me for guidance since I have sound leadership attributes,"

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Source: [Goffman \(1959;1972\)](#)

The meaning of impression management tactics as shown above will be applied to evaluate the interviewee's accomplishment at the interview.

## **2.2. Views on Impression Management Tactics**

IMT asserts that any person or establishment needs to create and sustain the impressions which are harmonious with the observations that a person desires to express to the community. [Stevens and Kristof \(1995\)](#), note that IMT produces a constructive picture of an individual or an article knowingly or unknowingly from each other's viewpoint. [Browning, Dillard, Sitkin and Sutcliffe \(2000, p.404\)](#) also concur with the views of Steven and Kristof (1995). They rationalize that IMT is an insight regarding "an individual, a thing, a crowd or an establishment by self-evaluating in a societal discourse".

IMT is a manifestation of stature and cultural awareness where an individual can portray a distinct persona to others about their goals and personality ([Schlenker, 2003](#)). Nevertheless, [Pontari and Schlenker \(2004\)](#) propose that IMT is a manifestation that can be demonstrated in everyday situations where communities communicate by body language and verbal means.

IMT is a supplementary attitude with the aim of convincing people. [Coffey \(2006\)](#), notes that IMT is a cognizant conduct of self-introduction to approach the alliance between an interviewer and interviewee during the interview procedure. [Uitdevilligen \(2005\)](#) also notes that IMT could be categorized as representing a positive outlook of oneself to an interviewer.

Hence, it is evident from the above standpoints that a candidate causing an erroneous response in the job interview will hinder his/her chances of selection for a job. Inapt comments or answers, improper conduct, or even wrong gestures can have an adverse effect on the candidate. Consequently, an interviewee has to produce the appropriate impact centered on the circumstance. Scholars are generally in conformity that applicants should apply various impression management tactics in interviews ([Erdogan, 2005](#)). Constructive reviews are anticipated from these strategies and the applicant's utilization of IMT to manage the encounter and demographics are required to inspire the interviewer ([Raja & Saba, 2012](#)).

[Kowalski \(2008, p.3\)](#) suggested a two-element form of IMT, namely "Motivation and Impression Construction". These elements establish the forms of Impression Management in terms of being self-centred and have self-performance, illustration, and prerogative and their use by persons.

## **2.3. Aspects of Impression Management Tactics**

Many researchers have endeavored to ascertain schemes to distinguish different Impression Management tactics. [Jones and Pittman \(1982\)](#) suggested four classes of self-performance approaches. The first focus was on flattery which persuades the targeted individual to act in an agreeable manner. Flattery can be realised by extolling the selected individual, causing self-improvement, or affording acceptance with the target individual. The next focus was regarding persons who utilise self-marketing in an attempt to convince the targeted individuals and also demonstrate capability. The third spotlight was in relation to a person employing exemplification to convey honesty and ethical principles, which can be accomplished using terminology and deeds. A person's primary aim was to display integrity, restraint and be considerate. The last focus was in relation to coercion where persons allude to the targeted individual being commanding

and very challenging.

The above approaches relate to promoting and showing an individual's reliance on guidance. [Jones and Pittman \(1982\)](#) also note that in these circumstances, candidates attempt to reveal their shortcomings in order to receive favorable treatment from the target individual.

[Kacmar, Delery and Ferris \(1992, p.6\)](#) subsequently split Impression Management tactics into two forms: "self-focus and other-focus". Self-focus can be defined as the spotlight of the discourse being about the candidates themselves while "other-focus" is more driven towards spotlighting the interviewer rather than the candidate. These two aspects are categorised based on the individual selected who could be either the interviewee or the interviewer. [Kacmar \(1992\)](#) describes speech devices as self-centered, e.g., illustrations, prerogatives, improvements, and self-advertising are employed. Conversely, other-focus approaches centre on "the target individual which comprises additional improvements, views compliance, flattering and feigned vulnerability" (p.18).

[Tedeschi \(1996, p.23\)](#) too, concurs that Impression Management can be separated into two segments: "Assertive-defensive and Strategic-tactical". Assertive-defensive is engaged by candidates to form a constructive portrayal, while Strategic-tactical is applied to protect a dented public persona. Self-focused or other-focused approaches signify forceful conduct. Protective conduct can be utilised to secure or correct an individual's character ([Schlenker, 1980](#)). Protective personality is generally applied to counter a perceived risk in a job interview, for instance, a candidate who has been unemployed for a while will endeavor to provide constructive explanations to preempt a negative consequence.

Self-focus is characterized as a reaction to maintain scrutiny by the interviewer to enable the interviewee to stand out ([Kacmar, 1992](#)). In addition, [Stevens and Kristof \(1995\)](#) elucidate that the broadest kind of self-focus is self-advertising or relating one's earlier achievements and knowledge confidently, to generate a perception of proficiency, exemplification (the act of persuading the interviewer that he or she is of good character, and could be an excellent illustration to others) and entitlement (professing to own previous accomplishments).

Other-focus applies "charm offensives" to sustain the spotlight on the interviewer ([Schlenker, 1980, p.31](#)). Charm offensives are anticipated to create social appeal. Some instances of this provided by [Kacmar \(1992, p.18\)](#) incorporates the "strategy of viewpoint compliance in certain respects such as being complementary" by the interviewee by displaying intimations of endorsement with the discourse contents, as well as utilising favorable comments to please the interviewer.

Candidates attending a job interview normally select other-focus approaches to influence the interviewer's impressions about them or highlight shared convictions, principles and perceptions. It could also manifest in the form of "non-verbal or suggestive demeanor", for instance: appearing cheerful to the interviewer or keeping eye contact and "nodding approvingly" ([Schlenker, 1980, p.31](#)). Some earlier studies have revealed that individuals utilise both "speech and non-verbal Impression Management tactics", and both of these approaches impact the "interviewer's appraisal" of the individual ([Gilmore & Ferris 1989, p.20; Stevens & Kristof, 1995, p.13](#)).

#### **2.4. The Importance of Impression Management in job interviews**

IMT, also referred to self-presentation, is described as a strategy where a candidate endeavors to affect the opinions other people have of him or her. A candidate attending a job interview applies Impression Management to influence the outcome with the assistance of the interviewer.

[Goffman \(1959\)](#) contends that these impacts created by the candidates are important to the degree of societal discourse. He clarifies that persons put on a camouflage to influence how other people will view them. Goffman also established that the behavior of persons in a workplace setting with co-workers was different when outside of the work setting. The presentation also described the approach used by the organisation to guide and control the impact on the workforce and the other factors they might take into account to maintain the functioning of a company.

[Gilmore and Ferris \(1989\)](#) observe that discernment of the organisation as being aware or unaware in an effort to adopt a particular position to create a representation for the duration of the interaction. Nevertheless, the studies examined the function of IMT in crafting resolutions in many of the non-verbal inspections (e.g. attire, observation contrasts) and not just the verbal approach. Substantial data also exists to confirm that the populace aggressively partakes in spoken IMT every day ([Kacmar & Carlson, 1999](#)). [Tsai, Wu, and Lo \(2010\)](#) propose that in interpersonal conduct and decision-making, the communications and the methodology used to determine the individual analysis of actions can have strong effects.

[Gilmore and Ferris \(1989\)](#) also contend that interviewers can be persuaded by IMT, whereas interviewees' accomplishments and their employment skills may not receive much attention or deliberation. This indicates that an applicant's capacity to draw the interviewer's attention by crafting a constructive impact is considerable. Hence, the importance of impression management and communication abilities of the candidate must be taken into consideration.

Scholars variously suggest that interviews present candidates the ideal prospect to showcase their personalities as both the interviewer and the candidate are striving to succeed in their own way ([Kacmar & Carlson, 1999](#)). A few verifiable investigations bear out this contention, demonstrating that IM strategies do, indeed surface on a regular basis during job interview settings ([Stevens & Kristof, 1995](#)).

Nevertheless, most of the studies mentioned above focused on applying IMT in informal and open ended interviews. Formalised interviews have elements that could likely restrict the application of IM tactics ([Campion et al., 1997](#)). Currently, only a single research study has investigated the application of IMT in formalised interviews. [Stevens and Kristof \(1995\)](#) scrutinized 24 audio taped interviews of university students seeking employment through a university employment centre. 7 of the 24 tapes consisted of formal interviews, utilising a behaviour description interview (BDI) that requires candidates to elaborate on previous skills and performance. The BDI layout draws questions from scrutinizing employment data, and candidates are required to answer the same questions, while cueing is limited. This methodology has been proposed to curtail unrelated discourse (see [Campion et al., 1997](#)). [Stevens and Kristof \(1995\)](#) established that there was infrequent use of specific IMT in the BDIs than in the informal interviews, for instance, no candidate interviewed using the BDI format utilised

compliance or validation tactics. On the other hand candidates interviewed using more open interview formats applied these approaches regularly.

In all the different variations of interviews, [Stevens and Kristof \(1995\)](#) noted a dearth of protective IMT expressions. It appeared that candidates favour concentrating on building their persona by aggressive IM tactics, instead of focusing the spotlight on their personalities by utilizing protective IMT. [Stevens and Kristof \(1995\)](#) also established that in all the different interview settings, candidates applied considerably less fawning tactics than self-advertising tactics.

#### **2.4. Past Studies on Impression Management Tactics**

IMT refers to generating a positive response in societal settings or to targeted parties. Investigations on Impression management in specialised situations primarily involve company annual reports, remedial actions, anxiety and mindset.

Though the information used for IMT investigations were not about interviews, they nevertheless give a perception into how impressions are shaped and appreciated in specialised situations. As stated earlier, there are four phases in IMT; Egotistical, which based on [Kacmar's \(1992\)](#) studies, is focused on the individual to create an impression that he/she has the necessary abilities and other beneficial characteristics. Demeanor, as stated by [Depaulo \(1992\)](#), is strategies used by a person to make him or her more personable to the intended person by utilizing spoken as well as gestural indicators. Exemplification, is as explained by [Rosenfeld \(1995\)](#) is focused on influencing the interviewer that he or she is a good model for others to follow. The final aspect is Entitlement which as stated by [Gilmore and Ferri \(1989\)](#) is a typical self-advancement ploy to impress the target.

[Debbie \(2008, p.5\)](#) undertook research to study two specific aspects of IMT namely "distortion of narratives" and "graph manipulation" which appear in corporate annual reports. There is scant information regarding the probable consequences of these exploitations on conclusions drawn by annual report end-users. More investigations are necessary to correlate with the current research. [Debbie \(2008\)](#) observes that it is vital for Impression Management to highlight the expected denotation of the message which was written to influence the readers.

[Ahmad's \(2011\)](#) investigations on IMT in interviews revealed that the conduct and ideals were articulated linguistically, negatively and positively. He established that an interviewee engaged in a variety of strategies to gain the interest of the interviewer. [Parveen \(2011\)](#) performed research on job interviews by applying theories of speech aspects ([Fletcher, 1989](#)) and IMT ([Stevens & Kristof, 1995](#); [Ellis, West, Ryan & deShon, 2002](#)). 5 interviewees contributed to this investigation. The information gathered was evaluated by focusing on conversational aspects which were mainly of speech, communication techniques and questions, while for IMT the target was confident personality, ego, self-introduction and other-emphasis. It was shown that both communication aspects and IMT's confident personality performed collectively to generate a convincing impact on the interviewers. The interviewers who were positively impacted by the interviewees' presentations paid particular attention to the interview proceedings.

A study on Negative Thinking and Interpersonal Problem Solving was undertaken by



[Sonja and Susan \(1995\)](#). In the initial investigation, 69 candidates selected from the faculty of Psychology in Stanford took part. Another 73 participants from the same faculty and university participated in the second investigation. In a further investigation, 69 students were involved. This study applied the theories of Rumination and Depression ([Nolen, 1995](#)) and Self-focused ([Carver and Scheier, 1992](#)). The first analysis revealed that the participants were inspired and were self-indulgent on their individual personality. The second investigation revealed that the participants had negative feelings on optimistic circumstances. The third study demonstrated that students delivered ineffective resolutions concerning issues connected to communication aspects. The findings of the first and third investigations revealed that the participants were extremely reluctant to provide clarifications concerning issues of a personal nature and issues with bad outcomes. Generally, the investigations revealed that anxious people were more inclined to expect negative outcomes in their daily activities.

[Liao and Richard \(2002\)](#) carried out two investigations on 21 university students who had reached the semi-finals in the hockey tournament of the British Universities' Sports Association. The hockey team was made up of both male and female players. The initial investigation looked at self-centred interest and presentation shortcomings due to emotional strain. The second investigation studied the connection between anxiety and self-centred features. The first investigation focused on event criterion and the following investigation focused on new basketball players who were required to concentrate on shooting skills while training using Baumeister's strategy. [Liao and Richard \(2002\)](#) established that self-centred focus revealed an individual's accomplishment particularly when faced with stressful situations. The first study revealed a high degree of self-centred focus due to rivalry. The extreme stress faced by the participants made them produce their best performance. The second investigation demonstrated that the degree of self-centred focus resulted in a reduction in the anxiety stage in contrast to their fellow students. Hence, self-centred focus could be boosted or reduced based on their reaction to anxiety. In the perspective of this study, the team members will play optimally and self-centred focus will be applied if they are aware that they are facing stiff competition. Nevertheless, a person feeling too anxious could be faced with a decline in self-focus.

[Madzhi \(2008, p.2\)](#) initiated an assessment of 68 students studying music at UPSI (Sultan Idris Education University). 3 key questions were put to these students; "why was practice necessary; how they utilized their time during practice; and the process they employed while practicing". By utilising the strategies of Self-Regulated Learning by [Bandura \(1991\)](#) and [Zimmerman \(1995\)](#), it was established that training was vital in the music arena, as music was more complex than being talented. Achieving dexterity and being very committed to the subject are vital if the students covet to be outstanding in music. Hence, self-regulated education as well as good discipline leads to superior achievement in this highly competitive field.

[Nilly and Jennifer \(2002\)](#) carried out an investigation on Self-focused Attention which is a meta-analysis centred on PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2012 APA. It was indicated that the specific meta-analysis combination resulted in 226 dimensional outcomes which emphasise the definite connection with self-focused awareness. It also produced a negative effect on anxiety, despair and adverse disposition. It was established that the specific varied characteristics involved self-focus as well as illuminating the crucial differences within the subject. Therefore, self-focus appeared to be associated with adverse consequences.

[Kamlesh and Rajneesh \(2009\)](#) performed an investigation on Self-focused Intervention for improving students which entailed 90 participants from a Positive Psychology program. They received grades for taking part in this customized mediation component. Nevertheless, 13 of the 90 participants failed to finish the post-mediation description on self-focus at the start of the program. The age difference of the remaining 77 students ranged from 19 to 24 years. The participants were required to complete the pre- and post-self-report of the questionnaire. An analysis of the completed questionnaires showed that the participants managed to resolve the questions without feeling anxious or depressed.

[Liu and Dean \(2001, p.5\)](#) carried out an investigation into speech and non-speech aspects influencing response patterns in “face-to-face” (FtF) as well as “Computer-Mediated Communication” (CMC) settings. They suggested creating educational approaches for attaining efficient communication and establishing a constructive impact in CMC distance learning. The findings reveal that these non-verbal aspects are: (1) visual clues, (2) paralinguistic clues, and (3) psychological clues. Non-verbal clues can be controlled to accomplish specific mutual targets, such as participating in other individual’s non-verbal and spoken conversation which has been studied extensively considering that they mutually affect people’s thought development in FtF settings. Psychological clues embrace a conservationist’s personal qualities while Paralinguistic clues comprise sustained coded presentation such as elementary speech prevalence, speech depth, speech length, speech ratio, breaks, and reaction time. It was established that significant leverage was given to self-presentation which governs the definition of self-impression, and the way it assists junior speakers. It can be of great assistance in enabling and communicating, and also reveal the individual’s skill in articulation. Hence, it assists an individual in speech as well as non-verbal abilities. Furthermore, it reveals the process by which society intentionally adjust their character at work. This is referred to as Impression Management which is the technique people employ to manage the representation other people have of them.

One of the reasons was to establish how it affects people and institutions if some manager’s assumptions were in fact detrimental to the ideal presentation. [Liu and Dean \(2001\)](#) made a strong suggestion that team work was important in all our actions so as to convey an excellent portrayal to others. They also state that in spite of our actions and achievements, it would be futile if we are still unable to project a constructive impression. It will only be reflected while doing team endeavors and tasks in a manner that can assist others. Therefore, if a pleasant image is appropriately conveyed, there will be no concerns later.

[Nguyen and Alexander \(1996\)](#) carried out an investigation on consumers’ self-performance centred on the hypotheses of Self-Presentation ([Goffman, 1959](#)) and Computer-Mediated Environment ([McCracken, 1998](#)). It was established that consumers were inclined to use diverse tactical demonstrations of themselves based on the circumstances. Additionally, with technological assistance, consumers were encouraged to enhance their achievement such as individual awareness, interests, and image gradually. It is commonly acknowledged that a person’s self-performance could be influenced by external factors such as globalisation, environmental pressures, colleagues and relatives. In this situation, interviewees are predisposed to modify their self-performance to draw constructive response. This could be interpreted by some as being insincerity, but what matters at the end of the day is that a good presentation puts an interviewee closer to securing a job, and that is what that really matters.

Walther and Malcolm (2002) carried out an investigation on Self-Presentation by applying Goffman (1959)'s hypothesis on facts gleaned from the interview sittings. It was established that tactical self-performance was applied to garner greater advantages and reduce mistakes. A few interviewees were rather extremely cautious about their conversations or sending of text. This was crucial to them to avoid misinterpretation of message or communication by the receiver. The findings revealed that the candidates were attempting to craft and preserve their qualities so as to achieve constructive assessments.

Nicole and Jennifer (2006, p.12) commenced an investigation on Self-presentation practice in the social media dating background. The candidates were selected from the online dating platform "Connect.com". The interview discussions centred on their thinking, personality and knowledge. 37 users of the dating platform were chosen based on their statistical significance such as sex, age, earnings and background. A telephone interview lasting between 30 to 90 minutes was conducted to amass data for the study. It was established that the individuals displayed greater versatility in portraying themselves on social media dating services. The findings showed that it was easier for them to articulate their thoughts, ideas, hopes etc., and using social media rather than through face to face encounters, at least in the early stages of the dating process.

Jimmy (2008) did research on self-presentation of America's popular baseball player, Curt Schilling. Shilling created his own blog on March, 2007 and used it to censure reporters. A thematic investigation was undertaken on two of his blog accounts by utilising a Grounded Theory strategy (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) and Self-Dialogue (Hermans & Kempen, 1993). The findings revealed that there were three approaches of self-performance that emerged in Shilling's entries. These were the censorious approach, dedicated personal approach and conscientious approach. Shilling was adroit in composing his article appropriately based on issues that he had mentioned on social media. Each of his entries reflected his personality at particular stages. The investigations show Shilling to be an extremely candid individual. Many readers of his blog were taken in by his candidness and straight talking personality.

In the framework of this study, it has clearly been established that a vigilant candidate facing an interview will succeed in applying his/her personality effectively to draw the interest of the interviewer. Insipidity of personality is generally not regarded positively by people. For further comprehension, exemplification will be explained in the ensuing section.

Sarah and Amy (2011) undertook a comparative study on America's well-known female politicians, Hillary Clinton and Sarah Palin. Students from the Midwestern University studying psychology took part in this study. The investigation incorporated a 2X2 pattern which means 2 (Hillary, Sarah) X 2 (Men, Women). The theories applied in this investigation were Role Congruity Theory and the Mixed Model of Stereotype Content (Eagly & Karau, 2002) and the Role of conflicting sexism (Glick & Fiske, 2001). The findings revealed that Clinton was considered to be less of a stereotype female person in contrast to Palin. While Palin was regarded to be less knowledgeable than Clinton, she was however seen as a more affectionate person compared to Clinton. It is apparent that being biased is a personal observation. Prejudicial attitudes can be embraced by any person against another, irrespective of sex, ideology, or political affiliation. The findings revealed that prejudicial attitudes could be transformed if exemplary personalities like Clinton and Palin understood the tactics of influencing people by their personalities and

encouraging postures. In the perspective of this study, the candidate must preclude negative portrayal by modifying some damaging standpoints.

[Stephanie and Tricia \(2012\)](#) carried out an investigation on mutual learning and leadership in student services. [Stephanie and Tricia \(2012\)](#) studied peer functions by examining (i) peer management in the field of adaptation (ii) intensifying capacities within modifications and (iii) peer's responsibility in residential living. Their studies indicate that while the partaking of knowledge regarding expertise and social surroundings between the academics and the undergraduates could have benefitted new students, such affinity or support did not occur. There were a few academics uninterested or willing to help new students, particularly while orientation was going ahead.

[Jennifer and Julian \(2013\)](#) performed an investigation on environmental establishments by way of management persuasion on workers' positive attitudes towards environmental protection. The focus of the research was to establish the vital role of management in instituting various adjustments in an establishment to induce employees to have a caring attitude towards the environment. The findings established that by adopting transformative policies, management could persuade employees by characterizing themselves as good models. This investigation also reveals that a reputable manager should have the capacity to inspire and extol the employees to excel in their work by applying tools like persuasion, motivation, psychology, reward etc., instead of just legal authority.

[Stevens and Kristof \(1995\)](#) state that privilege alludes to interviewees claiming ownership for their previous accomplishments which is then described in the interview discourse. In relation to the subject of entitlement an investigation was initiated by [Stevens and Kristof \(1995\)](#) with Time One survey. Out of 450 questionnaires sent out, 378 were returned for analysis. After the information was screened, only 362 acceptable questionnaires were left in Time One. For the Time Two survey 520 questionnaires were sent out and 429 survey forms returned, out of which only 409 forms were found acceptable for analysis. By comparing Time One and Time Two surveys, 220 replies comprising 139 female students aged between 18 years to 47 years were scrutinized. This research used [Ajzen's \(1991\)](#) hypothetical structure of Planned Behaviour. The findings revealed that the entitlement aspect could be associated with conduct that could avert candidates from adverse behavior.

A further research was carried out by [Kristof, Franke and Barrick \(2002\)](#) on educational self-importance among university undergraduates. Students' replies were obtained straight from the Survey Monkey. The finding revealed that there appeared to be a wide difference in educational advantage centred on the sexuality. A big disparity also existed in educational prerogative in both degree and sexuality, while some communications were recognised. Nevertheless, the evaluation established that while women appeared less advantaged in the first year, they were however more encouraged within.

From a different perspective, [Jacobs \(2003\)](#) carried out a study on preoccupation with Impression Management by administrators. It is evident that when [Jacobs \(2003\)](#) refers to the linking of Impression Management to posture, he is not pointing to the figure, but more about bearing and portrayal. He emphasizes its impact on his private life and the fact that due to capitalism he was compelled to modify his portrayal in order to harmonise. This ultimately materialises as society will feel the need to apply this method

to depict the managers so as to be successful. It is centred on the micro and macro stage on fixation with Impression Management that separates its utilization using another approach because we desire to portray the efficacious side of ourselves. [Greenberger, Lessard, Che and Farruggia \(2008\)](#) engaged in an investigation on Academic Entitlement. The research was framed to study which educational privilege corresponded to character and dispositional variables. They theorized that unspecified psychological privilege would be constructively and reasonably connected to Academic Entitlement. This research involved data collection from 466 undergraduates of a public university made up of 364 female and 102 male students, from the age range of between 19 and 25 years. A further 353 undergraduates from the same university also took part in the study. This group consisted of 244 female and 109 male students aged between 18 and 25 years. The candidates contributed demographic data by filling out a questionnaire. They also quantified the degree of professed parenting practices, Academic Entitlement, GPA, level of participation in educational integrity and educational rationale. Hence, [Greenberger et al. \(2008\)](#) framed a new measure to evaluate Academic Entitlement that included critical approaches towards instructors and anticipations of excellent scores for unexceptional performances. It was established that undergraduates' self-entitlement grew as they perceived that teachers ought to provide some respite and time off for some relaxation in order to attain good marks and obtain good grades. Nevertheless, when they articulated their views, teachers presumed that their approach was crude and offensive.

A study carried out by [Greenberger et al. \(2008\)](#) revealed that some candidates mentioned that one feature that inspired them to be industrious and learn to excel was their parents' wholehearted support in assisting them achieve their desired goals. Hence it was unsurprising that they felt more concerned and worried about achieving excellent grades instead of appreciating the education, acquiring skills and harnessing the information to their benefit.

A comparable research to [Greenberger et al. \(2008\)](#) was done by [Westerlaken, Jeffrey and Gai \(2011\)](#) on Entitlement to study the feeling of privilege as an indicator of retributive propensity. 220 participants filled questionnaires on degrees of retribution, privilege, and influence covering two sessions. Two classes of information were gathered from the candidates of undergraduate management program of an Australian university. The participants were provided with self-response questionnaires. Special identifier symbols were utilised to tally Time One and Time Two survey that comprised of age and gender. It was established that, Time One survey showed psychological privilege, retribution and influence, while Time Two survey evaluated egoistic privilege and consequences on privileges. It is notable that [Roulin et al. \(2015\)](#), carried out parallel investigations on frank and misleading impression management in job interviews. Furthermore, [Roulin \(2016\)](#) investigated interviewers' observations of IMT direction in employment interviews. In a further study, [Lars and Fanny \(2019\)](#) carried out an investigation on IMTs among indigenous and foreign speakers of four languages and established that having the skills to communicate verbally in multiple languages could be viewed favorably. The investigations mentioned above found that there is an absence of IMTs in job interview appraisals and suggested that investigations into IM should be frequently carried out to establish if prospective interviewees satisfy the present employment requirements. Similar to [Ahmed et al. \(2019\)](#), [Roulin et al. \(2015\)](#), [Roulin \(2016\)](#), [Lars and Fanny \(2019\)](#), [Mohd Noor et al. \(2017\)](#) had also investigated the job interview abilities of prospective engineers centered on the utilization of appraisal analysis assessment and verbal impression management. It was established that

prospective engineers must possess some vital components like linguistic proficiency (i.e., appropriate application of words and phrases), excellent communication abilities, and IMT to find employment. In concurrence with [Mohd Noor et al. \(2017\)](#), [Fant and Lundell \(2019\)](#) established that owing to different cultural practices between the indigenous and foreign speakers, self-presentations had very little disparity centered on indigenous behavioral forms.

A few investigations were carried out to determine if candidates had the necessary skills to be employed. [Tanius et al. \(2019\)](#) carried out one such study on Malaysian business graduates to ascertain their abilities and suitability to be gainfully employed. [Rahman et al. \(2019\)](#) investigated the discernments of managers regarding communication abilities among new graduates. Additional investigations were carried out by [Kenayathulla et al. \(2019\)](#) on the disparities between capability and significance of job abilities, and [Majid et al. \(2020\)](#) on the job capabilities of students in public higher-education institutions in Malaysia. All these investigations were carried out to achieve related goals, but different methodologies were utilized such as SPSS tests like ANOVA, descriptive analysis, and SEM tests. The results indicate that the problems faced by new Malaysian graduates cannot be resolved without mastery of their communications abilities. They have to attain good skills in the English language particularly in the utilization of suitable expressions as it would be very helpful in the evaluation of the students' employability abilities and IMTs in job interviews.

Though some studies have been undertaken on annual statements, problem solving, nervousness, and psychology, none have been undertaken currently on the four points of Impression Management which play a vital role in job interviews. Researchers have come to the conclusion that IMT plays only a very small role overall in the interview process. Therefore, the studies described above have shown that while investigations have been done on numerous aspects of specific communications none has integrated the facets of IMT in employment interviews.

### **3. Methodology**

Permissions were obtained from the organisation and interviewees in conducting this study. The organisation is located in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The organisation deals with telecommunications and provide technical services. The organisation conducted an open interview for two positions which are tele marketing and documents controller. The organisation did not allow the researcher to observe the interview as well as attach the interview transcriptions in the appendix. There were 15 interviewees interviewed. As for the qualitative study, Saturation 5-50 sampling would be convenient ([Creswell, 2014](#)). For the purpose of the study five recorded job interviews were sufficient. The job interviews data were analysed qualitatively using NVIVO and IMT [Goffman's \(1972\)](#) theory. The data have been coded and categorised according to the definitions of IMT, it was verified by the experts to ensure the transcription and coding on the right track. An abbreviation is used for IR-interviewer and IE-interview in the analysis part. There excerpts were chosen based on the objective of the qualitative study, one suitable excerpt would be representing for the entire study as per objective.

### **4. Analysis and Discussions**

The analysis is presented according to the themes. Sample occurrences of IMTs are provided below.

Self-presentation-IE1 lays out his resume in an orderly fashion. He begins with personal information, before moving on to early education, and finally mentions about university education.

- IR (laughs) Sorry (.) do you survey before coming for the interview...about this company (.) joining this company?  
 IE Ya (.) I do some survey inside internet and background from company ... about company (.) and where from (.) how long has been established in Malaysia is.

Self-presentation-The answer shows that IE1 has done quite a detailed research on the company to convince the IR of his interest in the job. The phrases ‘...some survey inside internet...background from company...where from...and ‘how long has been established in Malaysia...’ all go to show that IE did extensive background study of the company in preparation for the interview indicating to the IR his seriousness about getting the job and also indirectly showing that he is very well versed with utilizing the internet for research.

- IR What is your greatest strength?  
 IE Okay(.) for me ...what...what I realise about my strength is ...I am easily to com...communicate with people

Self-presentation-IE1 highlighted his qualities and capabilities, by talking about his strength and how easily he can communicate with people. The phrase ‘...what I realize about my strength...’ and ‘...I am easily to communicate with people’ indicated that he attempted to convince IR he was a good communicator, but it was unlikely that IR was convinced by IE’s statement that he was a good communicator as IE had poor interaction skills. He was unable to speak in proper sentences and made grammar errors – ‘...I am easily to com...’ [Tedeschi \(1996, p.23\)](#) Assertive-defensive is engaged by candidates to form a constructive portrayal.

- IR So ...what is the greatest achievement so far ... in your career?  
 IE In my career ...Okay ... I do ... I from-until now as a assistant consultant (.) I control I monitor 16 installation in the film side.

Self- focused-the statement ‘I control I monitor 16 installations...’ indicates that IE1 is trying to impress the interviewer of his abilities. This is in line with the findings of [Kacmar, Delery and Ferris \(1992\)](#) where they state that one impression management tactic in the candidate focusing on achievements of self. However, IE appeared to be hampered by weak interaction skills, and vocabulary which made him unable to describe in more detail his job as assistant consultant.

- IR What is your goal for next five years?  
 IE Actually... for the next five years...hmmm (.) I want to have my own business...(laughs)

Self- presentation-IE1 attempted to impress upon the IR that he was a capable person by answering ‘I want to have my own businesses’. The pauses in his answer indicated that had difficulty finding the right words to answer the question effectively to impress

the IR. He laughed at the end which appeared to show that he was not able to continue with the answer because of lack of interaction skills and linguistic competence.

- IR He is your mentor (.) okay ...if let's say you are hired (.) what can you offer us which you think other people can't offer?
- IE Okay ...first of all not many people can do both work (.) in the same time \_Type of work in the same time? First you have me as a consultant and then you have me as assistant in the office.

Self-focussed-IE1 stated that he could work both as a consultant and assistant in the office to convince IR that he was capable of taking on a bigger workload. He made a number of grammar errors such as '...in the same time...' and was repetitive. He mentioned the phrase '...in the same time...' twice and on the whole lacked linguistic competence.

### Extract-IE 2

- IR Account executive (.) okay good. Okay can you introduce yourself please?
- IE ...Hi! My name is XXX. You can call me XXX. I am from XXX (.) XXX. Just graduated from University Malaysia Terengganu (.) last November and...I just finished my ...industrial training at XXX an associate in XXX an audit trainee for six month and ...I have continued my work there ...to work there just nearly about for one month .

Self-presentation-IE2 introduced herself very well and in the correct order by beginning with personal details. She completed the introduction by talking about work experience in order to gain the confidence of IR. She also displayed self-confidence by stating 'you can call me XXX'. She completed the introduction by talking about work experience. Her detailed answer with mostly proper sentences and words showed good language competence, and interaction skills . The next focus was regarding persons who utilise self-marketing in an attempt to convince the targeted individuals'.

- IR You mean certification (.) you mean compliance
- IE ...certificate body. I would like to explore more.

Self- presentation-In this answer the interviewee talked about getting certification and 'explore more' meaning he wanted to learn more or become more capable. He attempts to display a constructive portrayal of himself [Tedeschi \(1996, p.23\)](#). This was done to create a positive impression on IR. There are two parts to IR's question- 'certification' and 'compliance'. IE gave a very brief answer on certification only which conveyed very little information to IR. IE showed poor communication skills vocabulary by saying '...certificate body' showing that IE is unable to describe further because of a lack of proficiency.

- IR ... Why do you think that we need to hire you?
- IE Because (.) I am very objective oriented person (.) that all I guess and I like the job very much. So (.) I think I am qualified. Well...I do not know.



Self-presentation-The term ‘...very objective oriented perso...’, ‘...I like the job very much’ and ‘...I am qualified’, showed that IE2 was attempting to present herself as a capable person and was qualified for the job. Other than saying ‘I am very objective oriented person’, she did not mention any other achievement to show that she was qualified for the job. She used the term ‘I’ five times showing that she is very self-centered.

- IR      What ...what is your greatest strength?  
IE      ... I am very positive ...

Self-focused-IE2 says that she is a very positive person in answer to IR’s question. Her one statement answer which can be described as self-advertising was not convincing enough as she did not provide details of positivity being her greatest strength.

- IR      Ya (.)You feel anywhere (.) which you are...  
IE      ....I...during my study (.) I join a lot ... curriculum activities in university. I have been in the... students’ representative counsel in the college. I have managed ...many types of program to the student. I ...bring their voice (.) complain to the university representative(.) to the ...cancellor and I think ... that is not every one can do...apalagi (Malay language)...ya have that experience (laughs).

Entitlements-IE2 listed out all her past achievements as a student leader while in university to augment her capabilities to stand a better chance of getting the job. With her limited interaction skills she attempts to claim ownership of her prior activities while still a student in order to convince the IR.

- IR      Okay ...what is your goal for the next five years?  
IE      Next five years (.) I would like to ...to achieve the chartered accountant requirement (.) to work as a account executive (laughs).

Self-presentation-IE2 intends to enhance her capabilities in the near future by getting the chartered accountant requirement. Her reply showed that she had only one goal i.e. to become an accounts executive. She laughed at the end of her answer which could be taken by the IR to mean that she was not a serious in her answer. She appeared to be unable to elaborate on her goal indicating lack of linguistic proficiency.

- IR      Okay good. What is your dream job actually?  
IE      ...I would like to have a business on my own but actually I don’t have a ...

Self-presentation- IE2 shows that she has the capability to do business. She was unable to complete her answer as the sentence was left hanging ‘...actually I don’t have a...’ While her inclination was to enter business, she appeared unable to elaborate on it and therefore communicate her aims effectively to the IR. She began her answer using proper grammar but was unable to continue due to either poor vocabulary, poor linguistics, or she did not adequately prepare herself for the interview, for instance she should have anticipated the standard questions asked in interviews and should have been well prepared.

- IR      Very good. Okay how do you manage your time?  
IE      ...manage (laughs)... I prefer to do my schedule first before I start my

day. I would like to list what I need to do every day ...for my job...I will ...plan earlier

Self-focused-In discussing time management IE2 gives a good account of how she will manage her time to indicate to IR that she is a reliable person. She gave a somewhat general answer to a very specific question on time management. She should have elaborated further for instance on schedule preparation; '...like to list...' and '...I will plan earlier...'. This would have provided the IR with the necessary information to make a proper judgment on her performance. It is also very evident that she was very self-focused as she used the word 'I' five times in her answer.

IR Solve the ...disagreement  
IE ... Solve the question. How can we get the winning situation so(.) we just try to satisfy either parties ...or any parties (laughs)

Self-focused-IE2 says in very vague terms that she can solve problems equitably, although the answer given is rather unconvincing. It can be ascertained from her answer that she was not able express herself clearly for the IR to make a meaning assessment due to a lack of communication skills and inability to articulate well. Her answer to the question was completely made up of incomplete sentences which showed lack of English language competence. Suggested answer: I would sit down and discuss and get various viewpoints to solve a disagreement.

Okay. During your ... when you are stressful or pressure situation (.) how do you cover come that situation actually?  
...when I am...stressful doing a job ...I will stop the job and do another job that I can ...

Self-focused-IE2 indicates that she has the quality to overcome stress in the job. The pauses in her reply, brevity and incomplete answer '...job that I can...' showed that she lacked good communication skills as well as language competence and therefore was unable to provide a satisfactory or convincing answer to the question put to her by the IR. The lack of good articulation prevented her from explaining further on how doing another job would help her overcome stress or pressure.

IR Nothing like that.  
IE (laughs) Not so... I don't have...failure in managing my anger ...expression

Self-focused-IE2 shows that she has the quality to manage her anger.

IR Okay (.) fine .Okay what can you offer which other cannot offer (.) if we hire you.  
IE I am a very ...what a ... objective oriented person. So I very ...I am able to finish... to do my work with whatever ...

Self- presentation-IE2 points out her capabilities using the terms '.....objective oriented person' and '.....I am able to finish my work.....'. IR asked a standard interview question. The answer provided by her was very general, lacked specifics and was therefore a very weak self-presentation. The number of pauses in her answer and grammar errors '...what a...objective...' and 'so I very...' showed that she lacked good language skills

which prevented her from providing a detailed answer as required by IR.

### Extract-IE3

- IR Okay good. Ah...why ...what is your great strength? Your strength? What is your strength?
- IE I am able to do ... hm...acc...prepare the account management (.) ahh...full account management (.) and I am able to do tax company (.) company tax ...ahhh...hmm.

Self-presentation-IE3 lists out her capabilities and expertise such as full account management and company tax to impress IR. The stress of IR's question was on 'your strength' as the phrase was mentioned thrice. IE's reply was very general and lacked a detailed description of her strengths due to poor articulation and a lack of language proficiency. There were gaps in her presentation as shown by pauses 'hm', 'ahh' 'ahhh' and 'hmm' which showed that she was anxious or nervous. As a result she was not able to communicate in a convincing manner with the IR.

- IR (laughs) okay what is your greatest achievement so far (.) during your studies? Greatest achievement (.) what do you achieve? Your greater achievement?
- IE ... dean list but I am not so smart (laughs)

Entitlements-IE3 takes credit for being mentioned in the 'Dean's List'

- IR Are you willing to work longer hours? Okay. What is your goal for next five years?
- IE Want to be an accountant (.) Yes that is mine ambition.

Self-presentation-IE3 says she wants to be an accountant in the next five years to impress the interviewer of her capacity. Two questions were put to IE3, but she only answered the second question. She gave a very brief answer which was short on details of how she was going to achieve her goal to be an accountant. Her answer did not provide the information required by the IR to make a favorable assessment of IE3's answer. Her very brief reply also showed inadequate sentence construction and grammar which indicated poor English language skills and a lack of interaction skills.

- IR So now you are (.) you are diverting your career. So what how do you going to achieve your dream?
- IE Well ... I am ... further my study in masters in accounting (.) hopefully (laughs).

Self-presentation-IE3 shows her intension to further his educational qualifications to convince IE3 of her capabilities. The question was about 'achieving her dream', and although her reply indicates she was ambitious in wanting to improve herself, she was unable to express her intensions proficiently enough due lack of communication and language skills. Her reply was very brief and had grammar mistakes. 'Well...I am...further...'and laughter showed that she faced difficulty finding the right words to express herself clearly in order to impress the IR.

- IR Okay. For example you are hired. For an example we hired you. Okay

- what you can offer which other people not do for the company? What do you think that you can offer which other people cannot do?
- IE ... I will ... so I am a fresh graduate (.) So I have no experience but I will ... I will be a fast learner to adapt the environment(.) to learn more about the accounting(.) the accounts and so on ...

## 6. Discussion

The finding shows that IE1 gave a detailed account of his qualification and experience in an orderly fashion and also showed that he had done some research about the company to impress the IR. Throughout the interview he took the opportunity to highlight her qualities, capabilities, and strengths to impress the IR. Overall IE1 put up a good presentation of her qualities. IE1 covered self-focused and self-presentation. As for IE2 gave a good presentation of his/her qualifications and work experience. She presented herself as a capable and reliable person who wanted to learn more and had the ability to solve problems such as stress. S/he also related her past achievements to impress the IR. Overall IE2 gave a good presentation of his/her capabilities and also covered self-focused, self-presentation and entitlements.

However, IE3 gave a short presentation of his/her qualification where s/he stated that s/he was capable of doing full account management and company tax to impress the IR. H/she also showed his/her past achievement in being listed in the 'Dean's List'. S/he highlighted his/her capabilities and qualities despite being a fresh graduate with no experience. Overall IE3 was not able to give a good presentation and IE3 covered self-presentation and entitlements.

In general, the findings revealed that while the answer was quite complete, IEs had some difficulty communicating well because of a lack of language competence as Coffey (2006) notes that IMTs could be categorised as representing a positive outlook of oneself to an interviewer and it has to express linguistically. Most of IEs were unable to speak in proper sentences and made grammar errors e.g. '...I am easily to com...' as Tedeschi (1996, p.23) noted on assertive-defensive is engaged by candidates to form a constructive portrayal. Further, Roulin (2016), Lars and Fanny (2019), Mohd Noor et al. (2017) reasoned out that interviewees should have certain important elements such as linguistic competence (i.e., correct use of words and phrases), good communication skills and integrating with IMTs to get jobs. In this answer the interviewees were clearly self-advertising. In line with the IEs, Kacmar (1992) describes speech devices as self-centered, e.g. illustrations, prerogatives, improvements, and self-advertising are employed where all these speech devices should be dwelled with IMTs to see the overall results of interviewees in job interviews.

Overall, the IEs appeared to be indulging in self-marketing as cited by Jones and Pittman (1982) and Roulin (2016), Lars and Fanny (2019), Mohd Noor et al. (2017) who had noted that the job interview skills of future engineers based on the application of appraisal analysis assessment and verbal impression management. It was also found that future engineers should have certain important elements such as linguistic competence (i.e., correct use of words and phrases), good communication skills, and IMT to get jobs. The last sentence by one of IEs answers was 'Well...I do not know'. His/her answer indicated that s/he is unsure of how to answer the question which would have been viewed negatively by the IR as Kacmar (1992) said speech devices as self-centered, e.g., illustrations, prerogatives, improvements, and self-advertising are employed. In line

with that s/he also did not complete his/her answer which may indicate that s/he has a poor vocabulary. His/her answer also showed that s/he came unprepared for the interview as this is a standard question asked in most interviews. Steven and Kristof (1995) stated that privilege alludes to interviewees claiming ownership for their previous accomplishments. In line with [Stevens and Kristof \(1995\)](#), [Uitdevilligen \(2005\)](#) inapt comments or answers... can have an adverse effect on the candidate. And, [Majid et al. \(2020\)](#) findings on the employability skills among students show that the issue of Malaysian fresh graduates cannot be solved unless they have mastered their interaction skills. They need to have high competence in the English language especially in the use of appropriate utterances then would be easier to evaluate the IEs' IMTs in job interviews. Self-regulated learning by [Zimmerman \(1995\)](#), it was established that training was vital, achieving dexterity and being very committed to the subject are vital if the students covet to be outstanding. IEs should have anticipated the question and prepared herself and provided an effective answer to convince IR of her capabilities. [Nguyen and Alexander \(1996\)](#) noted that a good presentation puts an interviewee closer to securing a job.

[Mohd Noor et al. \(2017\)](#), [Roulin \(2016\)](#), [Lars and Fanny \(2019\)](#) established that prospective engineers must possess some vital components like linguistic proficiency (i.e., appropriate application of words and phrases), excellent communication abilities, and IMT. [Kenayathulla et al. \(2019\)](#). [Majid et al. \(2020\)](#) found that students have to attain good skills in the English language particularly in the utilization of suitable expressions as it would be very helpful in the evaluation of the students' employability abilities and IMTs in job interviews.

## 7. Conclusion and Implication of the Study

IMT IE1 and IE2 were average performers, while IE3 performed poorly. Based on their poor in IMT, the overall performance of the IE3 can be rated as between average and poor. Based on HR officers' evaluation, IE1, IE2 and IE3 were kept in view however, HR experts' evaluation on IE1, IE2 and IE3 were not selected as the four aspects of IMTs were not fully covered.

The findings of the could redound to the benefit of the higher learning institution, and corporate sectors. The greater demands will be given for fresh graduates who have strong IMTs with the language competence which can be displayed in the real situation, as in job interviews. This study may also create awareness among interviewees that educational qualification is not the only important criterion to be successful in a job interview, but the ability to impress an interviewer is also a paramount importance. The higher learning intuitions and corporate sectors could be guided on what should be emphasised for job interviews in the current curriculum to improve fresh graduates' performance in job interviews better. For the researcher, the study will help to uncover critical areas in a job interview process that many researchers were not able to explore. There will be more job opportunities, therefore, the chances will be given to those who able to create favourable impression and have a strong language competence which contribute a better starting salary for fresh graduates. Thus, a new method or approach on learning how to perform well in job interviews may be arrived from this study which can be assisted industries in identifying skilled workforce proficient enough in English to compete at the competitive global market. A further study can be considered by using SPSS tool and integrating language management theory (LMT)([Spolsky, 2009](#)) to analyse the relationship on how language can be dwelled with IMTs in job interviews. And,

language instructors can be added as participants to see significant contributions for the study.

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