

FAIRNESS OF IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT IN EMPLOYMENT INTERVIEWS: A CROSS-COUNTRY STUDY OF THE ROLE OF EQUITY AND MACHIAVELLIANISM

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This study focused on the use of Impression Management (IM) in employment interviews from the perspective of interviewees and investigated possible antecedents of their perceptions regarding what is fair interviewee IM. Its rationale was largely based on the tenets of equity theory (Adams, 1963; 1965). Data from 163 potential interviewees (college students) approached in the UK and Portugal showed that, as expected, they tended to perceive as fair interviewee IM those IM tactics they also saw as fair for interviewers to use. Gender did not predict IM fairness perceptions, but IM use by the organization, Machiavellianism and Country did. Results regarding the influence of experience of job interviews were inconclusive. Finally, based on these findings, suggestions are made for further research and for the education of both interviewees and interviewers regarding behavior in the employment interview.

Impression management [IM] refers to individuals' attempts at determining the impressions others form of them regarding their behavior, motivation, morality, and other characteristics such as their intelligence and future potential

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(Rosenfeld, Giacalone, & Riordan, 1994). IM can be verbal and nonverbal, more or less deliberate, and be stimulated by both situational and dispositional factors (Rosenfeld, Giacalone, & Riordan, 1994; 2002; Schlenker & Weigold, 1992). Employment interviews, in particular, would appear to foster conscious IM efforts by both parties, given the situation's "high stakes" (Delery & Kacmar, 1998; Gardner & Martinko, 1988; Rosenfeld, 1997; Rosenfeld et al., 2002). This study is concerned with any attempts by the interview parties to present themselves/their organization in a good light.

IM USE AND THE VALIDITY AND FAIRNESS OF INTERVIEWS

In selection and recruitment interviews, candidates' IM efforts can positively affect interview outcomes such as employment offers and ratings by interviewers (e.g., Kacmar, Delery, & Ferris, 1992; Stevens & Kristof, 1995), although not necessarily so. Indeed, all individuals are not equally skilled at IM (Turnley & Bolino, 2001), interviewer characteristics - such as warmth - can affect interviewee IM and interview performance (e.g., Liden, Martin, & Parsons, 1993), and not all IM tactics seem to be equally situation-appropriate (Kacmar et al.). Finally, a low degree of congruence between the interviewee and interviewer definitions of the situation can potentially jeopardize the efficacy of IM tactics (Gardner & Martinko, 1988).

Since interviewee and interviewer IM styles may have an impact on interview outcomes, concerns have been raised about the possible effect of IM on the validity and fairness of selection decisions (i.e., the ability to assess how well candidates would do on the job without discriminating against those less skilled in situation-appropriate IM). Nevertheless, there is no agreement regarding how much of an issue this is as, for instance, the ability to carry out effective IM can be seen as an important competence that favors job performance and is therefore no cause for concern (e.g., Delery & Kacmar, 1998; Fletcher, 1989; 1990; Rosenfeld, 1997; Rosenfeld et al., 2002; Stevens & Kristof, 1995).

Various ways of minimizing any undesirable impact of candidate IM on interview selection decisions have been suggested. Where the ability to use certain IM tactics is seen to be job-relevant, research suggests that the choice of interview question format may help elicit the use of relevant IM tactics (Ellis, West, Ryan, & DeShon, 2002). Another line of proposals encourages organizations to prepare to cope with potentially misleading candidate IM attempts, such as by concentrating on verifiable information (see Fletcher, 1989; Rosenfeld, 1997). Yet another suggests attempting to influence the interview parties to adopt a more ethical or mutually beneficial stance (Fletcher, 1989; 1992a; 1992b; Kirkwood & Ralston, 1996; 1999).

The latter may be a fruitful approach since it would encourage both parties to self-regulate their IM use. Given that individuals are sensitive to the fairness of

selection processes and outcomes rather than being merely concerned with obtaining positive outcomes for themselves (see Anderson, Born, & Cunningham-Snell, 2001), one way of implementing this type of proposal would be to present issues in terms of what it would be fair for the parties to do IM-wise. Those wishing to adopt this approach would benefit from knowledge of what the antecedents of perceptions of the fairness of one's own IM use in selection contexts may be. As far as the perceptions of candidates are concerned, at least, such issues do not appear to have received a great deal of attention (e.g., see Anderson et al., 2001; Fletcher, 1992a).

As mentioned above, the interview is a situation in which conscious IM use is likely due to its highstakes. Therefore, some of the issues about which the parties are likely to be concerned relate to the impact of IM on outcomes of selection processes. Equity theory is therefore relevant in this context (Adams, 1963; 1965). It suggests that individuals are motivated to attain equitable returns in their interpersonal relationships, that is, equity between the ratio of their inputs (e.g., effort, experience) to their outputs (e.g., pay, status), and the same ratio for other individuals. (Just as inputs and outputs can be anything which the individual deems relevant, so too individuals chosen for the comparison can vary and can, for instance, include the other party in the relationship or a third party). Equity violations (benefiting either party) will generate a state of tension which will prompt the individual to restore equity (either by cognitive or by behavioral means). The theory has received general support (Mowday, 1991).

The information which each party provides at the interview can be seen as an input into the interview exchange that impacts on their own interview outcomes, that is, either being selected for the job or impressing the interviewee enough so the selected candidate(s) accept(s) a job offer. One instance of attaining equitable exchanges is where the parties deploy IM tactics to the same extent (input) and this affords each of them equally favorable outcomes. Therefore, one might expect a relationship between what interviewees see as being fair for them to do and what they see as fair for interviewers to do, since equivalent IM use by both would yield "equitable"/fair exchanges. The following was therefore hypothesized:

H₁ Interviewee perceptions of interviewers' IM use as being fair will contribute to the prediction of perceptions of interviewees' IM use as being fair, too.

Since interview variables may be influenced by earlier stages in the selection process (Anderson & Shackleton, 1993), such as vacancy advertising, and IM can be used to influence how the organization is portrayed to outsiders (Rosenfeld et al., 2002), the following was hypothesized:

H₂ Interviewee perceptions of greater IM attempts by the organization in the advertising of an employment vacancy will contribute to the prediction of greater perceived fairness of IM use by applicants.

Experience of interviews relates to type of intended self-presentation at interviews (Fletcher, 1990). Moreover, since socialization processes can impact on equity evaluations (Adams, 1965), interview experience may contribute to individuals' learning about what is common behavior at interviews and endorsing the view that at least some aspects of IM are expected of candidates, and are, therefore, "fair".

H₃ Individuals' experience of interviews will contribute to the prediction of perceptions of interviewee IM use as being fair.

Socialization experiences also vary between men and women - including those experiences which may influence IM behaviors, such as exposure to gender role expectations of modesty on the part of women (e.g., Rudman, 1998). It is therefore possible that there will be gender differences in what individuals have learned to be the expected/accepted use of IM tactics in interpersonal situations, hence in what would be fair for the parties to do in an interview situation.

H₄ Gender will contribute to the prediction of how fair interviewee IM use in interviews is viewed to be by interviewees.

Although countries' workforces can be diverse (e.g., ethnically) (Rosenfeld et al., 1994), countries are also characterized by national cultures (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997) and there exist socialization and acculturation processes into adulthood (Adams, 1965). These may lead to the diverse workforce of a country developing communalities in its approach to interviews. For instance, in an English-speaking, noncatholic European country such as the UK, self-assertion in social situations and highlighting past achievements would be more in accordance with the culture of the country than with that of, say, Portugal. These behaviors would therefore be likely to be perceived as more normative and hence more acceptable in an interview situation (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997; Schwartz, 1999).

H₅ The country in which individuals are living will contribute to the prediction of their perceptions of the fairness of interviewee IM use in the interview.

Machiavellianism is a personality antecedent of effective IM, including deceptive IM and IM in interview situations (Christie & Geis, 1970; Fehr,

Samson, & Paulhus, 1992; Rosenfeld et al., 2002). Because high Machiavellians hold unflattering and cynical opinions of others, and show emotional detachment in interpersonal situations, even if behaving manipulatively (Christie & Geis), the following was hypothesized:

- H₆ High interviewee Machiavellianism will contribute to the prediction of interviewee IM use as being fairer.

METHOD

DESIGN

A survey design was used to test all hypotheses, except H2 for which a quasi-experimental independent samples design was employed. Organizational IM was manipulated through the presentation of one of two advertisements to participants: a) IM advertisement containing attempts at creating a good impression of the organization; b) NoIM advertisement, where such attempts were eliminated. Allocation to conditions was made according to a quota sampling technique.

PARTICIPANTS

Sample A Participants ($N = 163$) were a convenience sample of students approached on the campuses of one UK university ($N = 81$), and one university in Portugal ($N = 82$). These campus settings were deemed appropriate given the context of organizational efforts to recruit there for graduate positions. Sample descriptions are presented in Table 1.

Sample B The effectiveness of the Organizational IM manipulation was checked using Sample A's Portuguese participants. In the UK, this was done using an independent convenience sample (sample B, $N = 74$), also approached on campus (see Table 1).

MEASURES

IM Fairness items Based on the typology of IM tactics used by Rosenfeld et al. (2002) (see Table 2), items were generated to reflect ways in which these IM strategies could be applied in an interview. This set of items was also formulated so as to cover a range of aspects of IM use discussed in the literature: verbal and non-verbal tactics (items 1 and 2, Nonverbal), self- and other-focused strategies, use of IM with more or less deceitful intent, and interview IM preparation (items 1 and 2, Preparation) (Fletcher, 1992a; Kacmar et al., 1992; Kirkwood & Ralston, 1996).

For each IM tactic, two items were created so as to elicit responses about the fairness of their use by the interviewer and the interviewee. For Interviewer IM

Fairness items, instructions were: "At job interviews, interviewers may behave in certain ways in order to create a good impression of themselves and their organization. How fair is it for interviewers to do each of the things listed below to create a good impression? Please circle one number from 1 = *Always Fair* to 5 = *Never Fair*. For Interviewee IM Fairness items, instructions were: "In order to make a good impression at the interview [for the jobs mentioned in the IM or NoIM advertisement presented], you may behave in particular ways. How fair would it be for you to do each of the things listed below?" (1 = *Totally fair*; 5 = *Totally unfair*).

TABLE 1
SAMPLE DESCRIPTIONS

Variables		UK	Sample A (Portugal)	Total	Sample B (UK)	
Nationality	Frequencies:					
	UK Participants	UK	44.4%	---	---	60.8%
		EU (non-UK)	27.2%	---	---	16.2%
		Other	28.4%	---	---	23%
	Portugal Participants	Portugal	---	92.7%	---	---
		EU (non-Portugal)	---	.00%	---	---
Other		---	7.3%	---	---	
Gender	Frequencies:					
		Males	39.5%	47.6%	43.6%	45.9%
		Females	60.5%	52.4%	56.4%	54.1%
Age (Years)	<i>M</i>	26.30	23.33	24.8	27.7	
	<i>SD</i>	7.02	5.10	6.28	7.68	
Years in Country of Data Collection	<i>M</i>	13.32	20.48	16.94	18.01	
	<i>SD</i>	12.40	6.29	10.40	3.89	
Ethnicity	Frequencies:					
		White	73.8%	93.9%	84.0%	68.9%
		Afro-Caribbean	3.8%	6.1%	4.9%	2.7%
		Asian	13.8%	.00%	6.7%	17.6%
		Other	8.8%	.00%	4.3%	10.8%
Work Experience (Years)	<i>M</i>	5.06	1.67	3.4	6.1	
	<i>SD</i>	6.66	4.56	5.93	7.97	
Job Interviews Attended	Frequencies:					
		None	2.5%	69.5%	36.0%	5.4%
		1-2	31.3%	19.5%	25.3%	25.7%
		3-5	37.5%	11.0%	24.1%	29.7%
		6-10	22.5%	.00%	11.0%	28.4%
		>10	6.3%	.00%	3.1%	10.8%
Likelihood of Applying for Advertised Jobs (1= <i>very likely</i> ; 5= <i>very unlikely</i>)	<i>M</i>	2.28	2.55	2.41	---	
	<i>SD</i>	1.21	1.25	1.24	---	

TABLE 2
IM TACTICS CATEGORISATION^a

IM Type	IM Category	Specific Features	Items
Acquisitive IM Attempts to create a favorable impression.	Ingratiation Aim: making others like one.	Self-enhancement (Stressing of one's good qualities)	Ingratiation 1 ^b , 2 ^b , 3 & 4
		Opinion-conformity (Display of attitudes/opinions/behaviors similar to the IM target's)	Ingratiation 5 ^b & 6
		Other-enhancement (Flattery & compliments of IM target)	Ingratiation 7 & 8
		Self-promotion Aim: being seen as competent.	Self-promotion 1&2
		Intimidation Aim: being feared.	Intimidation
Protective IM Attempts at avoiding looking bad.	Accounting Capitalising on successful outcomes, by highlighting or distorting one's association with them.	Enhancement (Inherently deceptive: maximising the desirability of a positive event)	Accounting
		Excuses (Admitting to wrongdoing whilst denying responsibility)	Excuses 1 & 2
		Association Distancing oneself from negative events/people.	Association 1 & 2

^a Adapted from Rosenfeld et al., 2002; ^b Items adapted from MIBOS (Kuman & Beyerlein, 1991 in Rosenfeld et al., 2002).

Machiavellianism Christie & Geis' (1970) Mach IV (Version 1) scale was used to operationalize Machiavellianism, with three items reworded so as to make them gender-neutral. Half of the scale's items are worded positively (e.g., "Most people are brave."), the other half negatively. Ratings were obtained on a 6-point scale (from +3 = *strongly agree* to -3 = *disagree strongly*). The scale's alphas typically exceed .70 (but they can also be in the .40s for the whole scale), and its construct validity is well established (Fehr et al., 1992).

Organizational IM An advertisement for varied graduate employment opportunities in a fictitious publishing company was conceived, based on a UK's national newspaper advertisements believed to reflect a general style of

advertisements by large companies potentially applicable across countries. A second advertisement was created by eliminating as far as possible organizational self-enhancement attempts (see Table 2), whilst maintaining a realistic text. (See Appendix for the two advertisement versions, and Table 1 for the self-reported likelihood of participants applying for the advertised positions).

Manipulation check The success of the Organizational IM manipulation was assessed using the item: "When writing this advertisement, how hard do you think the organization was trying to make a good impression on potential candidates?" (1 = *Very hard*; 5 = *Not hard at all*).

PROCEDURE

The Portuguese translation of the questionnaire was checked through a process of oral backtranslation. Additionally, Sample A was presented with the Interviewer IM Fairness items, a job advertisement and the Interviewee IM Fairness items on the one hand, and the Machiavellianism scale on the other, in a counterbalanced sequence to tackle possible order effects.

RESULTS

160 cases (Sample A) were left for analysis after 3 were excluded from statistical analysis (for reasons such as idiosyncratic response patterns). Prior to analysis, Machiavellianism items were scored from 1 = *strongly agree* to 6 = *disagree strongly*.

MANIPULATION CHECK

The Organizational IM manipulation effectiveness check was performed using the data of the Portuguese participants ($N=80$) and Sample B. As expected, the organization was thought to have attempted significantly less hard to create a good impression in the NoIM condition ($M = 2.28$, $SD = .99$) than in the IM condition ($M = 1.78$, $SD = 1.10$); $T(152) = 3.26$, $p < .01$.

PRINCIPAL COMPONENTS ANALYSES

Principal component analyses were carried out (using varimax rotation) on the Interviewer IM Fairness and Interviewee IM Fairness item sets. This was deemed appropriate given that the items were not part of an established scale nor were they based on a theoretical framework regarding the dimensions of IM fairness.

Missing responses appeared to be random. To minimize variance reduction and, given the study's rationale, Interviewer IM Fairness and Interviewee IM Fairness missing cases were replaced with the mean for participants of the same gender, ethnic group, country of data collection, and interview experience. (Tables 3 and 4 display descriptive statistics after missings estimation). Variable

transformations were attempted where skewness and/or kurtosis values divided by their standard error were larger than |2|. Transformations improving normality were kept and variables renamed accordingly with the following prefixes: Sqrt = square root; Log = logarithm; Inv = inverse; R = reflect. After transformations, no univariate outliers remained with a criterion of z -score $> |3.29|$. Four multivariate outliers were identified through Mahalanobis Distance, with $p < .001$, and excluded only from the principal component analyses for which they were outliers. KMO values were acceptable (.798 and .868, for the Interviewer IM Fairness and Interviewee IM Fairness items, respectively).

The analysis of the Interviewer IM Fairness items ($N=158$) yielded 2 principal components (Table 3). With a .44 cut-off for inclusion of variables in the interpretation of a component, Ingratiation 6 did not load on any component. Components were interpretable in light of the rationale for the present study (looking at perceptions of IM fairness). They were labeled Interviewer Impression Manipulation Fairness (Interviewer Manipulation) and Interviewer Image Enhancement Fairness (Interviewer Enhancement) because, as opposed to Interviewer Manipulation, the second component referred to the deployment of IM tactics that did not involve deliberately misleading candidates.

Two components were extracted from the analysis of the Interviewee IM Fairness items ($N=158$). With a cut-off of .40 (Table 4), the first was labeled Interviewee Impression Manipulation Fairness (Interviewee Manipulation), and the second Interviewee Image Enhancement Fairness (Interviewee Enhancement). Indeed this solution paralleled the grouping of the items' Interviewer IM Fairness equivalents. Accordingly, Acclaiming (worded as explicitly deceitful in the interviewee version) now belonged with the more impression-manipulative items; so did Ingratiation 8, possibly having to do with the situational appropriateness of IM tactics varying according to the interview status of the IM actor deploying them.

Scores for the four components were calculated by adding scores on component variables, divided by their number. Total scores for the two sets of components were computed in the same way. Calculations were done using the original variables, which tended to yield higher Cronbach alphas (Tables 3 and 4) than transformed variables.

HYPOTHESES TESTING

Three multiple regression analyses were performed with Total Interviewee IM Fairness, Interviewee Manipulation and Interviewee Enhancement as the criteria. For each of these, the Interviewer IM Fairness variable used as the predictor to test H1 was that which paralleled the Interviewee IM Fairness factor used as the criterion. Indeed, singularity problems would arise from having both a full set of individual component scores and their total in the analyses.

TABLE 3
INTERVIEWER IM FAIRNESS ITEMS' DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND PRINCIPAL COMPONENTS ANALYSIS

Variable	Item	Loadings ^a			Means and SDs (before variable transformation)	
		Interviewer Impression Manipulation Fairness	Interviewer Image Enhancement Fairness		M	SD
RsqrtExcuses 1	Giving excuses for past company fiascos, when it was really the organization's responsibility	-.71	---	---	4.29	0.91
Ingratiation 3 Association 2	Exaggerating the organization's strengths/ virtues somewhat .....	.69	---	---	3.79	0.99
RsqrtAssociation 1	Saying he/she dislikes a particular university or organization because the candidate does not appear to think very highly of it .....	.61	---	---	4.02	0.93
RsqrtExcuses 2	Minimizing real and close associations that the organization has with people or events that the candidate may have a bad impression of ..	-.60	---	---	3.52	1.01
SqrtIngratiation 7 Rsqrt Self-promotion 2	Minimizing the organization's failures by putting them down to bad luck or accidents	-.59	---	---	3.89	0.88
Ingratiation 5	Strategically flatter all candidates .....	.55	.32	---	3.06	1.21
Rlog Intimidation	Claiming that the organization has certain virtues that it does not, if they think that the candidate would feel happy there anyway	-.53	---	---	4.09	1.02
Ingratiation 4	Expressing attitudes that are similar to the candidate's as a way of letting him/her know that the two of you are alike .....	.50	---	---	3.46	1.10
Ingratiation 6	Putting the candidate under unnecessary stress because they know he/she wants the job badly enough not to complain	-.48	---	---	4.54	0.84
SqrtPreparation 1	Presenting the organization in a positive light to the candidate, even if it involves omitting some less positive aspects .....	.46	.40	---	3.41	1.11
SqrtIngratiation 2	Initially disagreeing with the candidate to then appear convinced by his/her argument	---	---	---	3.48	1.01
	Using techniques suggested by interview coaches (e.g., particular seating arrangements) to make the company look interesting to the candidate	---	.66	---	2.21	1.06
	Look for opportunities to let the candidate know about the organization's virtues/strengths	---	.63	---	1.78	0.88

Table 3 continued

Variable	Item	Loadings ^a			Means and SDs (before variable transformation)	
		Interviewer Impression Manipulation Fairness	Interviewer Image Enhancement Fairness	Interviewer Image Enhancement Fairness	M	SD
Ingratiation 1	Try to let the candidate know that the organization has a reputation for being liked	---	.62		2.72	1.04
Self-promotion 1	Making the candidates leave the interview feeling the organization's employees are highly competent at their jobs	---		.58	2.42	1.04
	Claiming that the organization has most credit for innovations in their area of activity	---		.55	2.91	1.04
Nonverbal 1	Deliberately use body orientation and eye contact to appear to be interested in what the candidate says	---		.53	2.50	1.13
	Compliment the candidate on applying for the organization	---		.51	2.47	1.09
Preparation 2	Putting themselves across in a preplanned fashion	---		.51	3.39	1.14
Nonverbal 2	Dress differently from what he/she normally does for work, in order to impress the candidate .....	.43	.44		3.34	1.31
		25.9%	9.8%			
Variance accounted for by components:						
Cronbach's alphas:	Total Interviewer IM Fairness = .83	.79	.75			

^aOnly loadings of .32 and above are shown.

TABLE 4
 INTERVIEWEE IM FAIRNESS ITEMS' DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND PRINCIPAL COMPONENTS ANALYSIS

Variable	Item	Loadings ^a		Means and SDs (before variable transformation)	
		Interviewee Impression Manipulation Fairness	Interviewee Image Enhancement Fairness	M	SD
Rsqrt Association 2	Saying you did not like your experiences at a university or organization because the interviewer does not appear to think very highly of it.....	-.76	---	3.73	1.10
Ingratiation 7	Strategically flatter the interviewer.....	.74	---	3.18	1.30
Excuses 2	Minimizing the importance of your past failures by putting them down to bad luck or accidents.....	.68	---	3.14	1.12
Ingratiation 5	Expressing attitudes that are similar to the interviewer's as a way of letting him/her know that the two of you are alike.....	.67	---	3.03	1.15
Rsqrt Acclaiming	Claiming to have had more credit than you did for the outcome of innovative group work.....	-.63	---	3.46	.08
Self-promotion 2	Claiming that you have experience that you don't have, to come across as being a competent candidate.....	.60	---	4.09	1.02
Rsqrt Ingratiation 8	Compliment the interviewer on working for that company.....	-.59	---	3.13	1.21
Ingratiation 6	Initially disagreeing with the interviewer to then appear to be convinced by his/her argument.....	.58	---	3.37	1.15
Excuses 1	Giving excuses for your past failures to avoid looking responsible, i.e., not admitting that they may really have been your fault.....	.57	---	3.27	1.12
Sqrt Ingratiation 3	Exaggerating your virtues/strengths somehow.....	.57	.38	3.06	1.15
Intimidation	If you feel you are the candidate they want, hinting that you may refuse the job if they do not offer you a better deal.....	.45	---	2.65	1.25
Association 1	Minimizing real associations you have with people or events that may lead to the interviewer creating a bad impression of you (e.g., a previous employer).....	.43	---	2.61	1.17

Table 4 continued

Variable	Item	Loadings ^a			Means and SDs (before variable transformation)	
		Interviewee Impression Manipulation Fairness	Interviewee Image Enhancement Fairness	Interviewee Image Enhancement Fairness	M	SD
Preparation 2	Use nonverbal behavior as suggested by interview coaches to put yourself across as being an interesting candidate	---	.80	.80	2.08	1.13
Nonverbal 2	Dress different from what you normally do in order to impress the interviewer	---	.73	.73	2.20	1.23
Inv Ingratiation 2	Look for opportunities to let the interviewer know your strengths/virtues	---	-.71	-.71	1.56	0.82
Log Preparation 1	Use the tips recommended by an interview coach in order to present yourself in a positive light	---	.70	.70	1.79	1.01
Nonverbal 1	Deliberately use body orientation and eye contact to show interest in what the interviewer says	---	.66	.66	2.29	1.28
Log Self-promotion 1	Making sure that the interviewer thinks that you would be a highly competent member for their organization	---	.64	.64	1.56	0.77
Ingratiation 4	Presenting yourself to the interviewer in the most positive light, even if it involves omitting some less positive aspects .....	.36	.49	.49	2.25	1.02
Ingratiation 1	Try to let the interviewer know that you have a reputation for being liked .....	.38	.47	.47	2.48	1.12
Variance accounted for by components:		32.7%	11.4%	11.4%		
Cronbach's alphas:		.86	.82	.82		
		Total Interviewee IM Fairness = .89				

^a Only loadings of .32 and above are shown.

Prior to analysis, the data were inspected for missing cases and outliers, using the same criteria as above. Two cases with missing responses on Job Interviews were deleted, leaving 158 cases. Missing values on Machiavellianism items appeared to be random and were replaced by the sample mean. Machiavellianism scores for each participant were then computed by adding the scores on each item, divided by their number (Cronbach's $\alpha = .66$). Machiavellianism and Interviewer Manipulation had one univariate outlier each. To reduce their impact, they were given a score that was one unit more extreme than the next most extreme score.

The correlations between the Interviewee IM Fairness variables and their hypothesized predictors tended to be significant (and, where applicable, in the expected direction). Only gender correlated with none of the criteria, whereas Organizational IM was correlated only with Interviewee Enhancement. Since, in multiple regression, the optimal set of predictors would be one where predictors have low intercorrelations but high correlations with the criterion, only variables which had a strong enough correlation with each criterion for it to be significant were included in the regression analyses.

The search for multivariate outliers yielded one outlier (a Portuguese participant who had work and interview experience). This was deleted, leaving 157 cases for analysis.

Country and Job Interviews were confounded ($r = -.69, p < .01$) - with Portuguese participants and those lower on Job Interviews (mainly Portuguese participants) tending to rate interviewee IM behaviors as most unfair. It was therefore decided to use hierarchical multiple regression to explore whether Country added anything to the prediction of the criteria, after Job Interviews, together with the other predictors, had been entered into the equation.

Table 5 displays the results of the hierarchical multiple regression analyses. In all three, Interviewer IM Fairness, Machiavellianism, Job Interviews, Country and Organizational IM (the latter only where Interviewee Enhancement was the criterion) accounted for a sizeable and significant proportion of the variance in the Interviewee IM Fairness criteria (R^2).

H1 and H6 were supported in that, with the effect of all other predictors accounted for, Interviewer IM Fairness and Machiavellianism significantly predicted Interviewee IM Fairness. Total Interviewee IM Fairness was best predicted by Total Interviewer IM Fairness, Interviewee Manipulation by Interviewer Manipulation, and Interviewee Enhancement by Interviewer Enhancement. There was also partial support for H2, given that Organizational IM predicted Interviewee Enhancement.

Job Interviews significantly contributed to the prediction of Interviewee IM Fairness in step 1, but not in step 2, after Country entered the equation. Strictly speaking, H3 was therefore not corroborated by the data. On the other hand, H5

was supported in that, with the effect of the other predictors accounted for (including Job Interviews), Country significantly contributed to the prediction of the Interviewee IM Fairness criteria. Finally, H4 was rejected as Gender did not appear to be a relevant variable¹.

DISCUSSION

Results suggested that interviewees tend to regard it as fair for them to use those IM tactics they also consider it fair for interviewers to use, as predicted based on equity theory assumptions (Adams, 1963; 1965). Perceptions regarding the degree of fairness of one's own IM behavior appeared to reflect an equitable approach on the part of interviewees rather than absolute judgments guided by self-interest and independent of what is seen as fair for interviewers to do. This is also in line with other work espousing an organizational justice perspective on selection (Anderson et al., 2001).

Beyond the influence of equity assessments, dispositional factors also appeared to play a role. As expected, high Machs did see interviewee IM as being fairer. Moreover, there was some support for the idea that interviewee (socialization) experiences (except those that are gender-related) may influence perceptions of the fairness of one's own use of IM tactics as an interviewee. Indeed, interviewee IM was perceived to be fairer in the UK than in Portugal, consistent with the characterization of English-speaking countries as environments where active self-assertion is relatively more valued (Schwartz, 1999). Reading a job advertisement in which the recruiting organization made greater use of IM tactics was also associated with perceptions of the use of interviewee IM tactics in the interview as being fairer. Additionally, those with more interview experience perceived all types of interviewee IM to be fairer. In line with this study's rationale, one possible explanation for this is that more experienced individuals may have come to perceive IM on the part of interviewees to be an expected part of the interview "game"/exchange which can be equitable/fair as long as both parties have equivalent input/output ratios.

Caution vis-à-vis this study's conclusions may nevertheless be required since various empirical issues remain open. Organizational IM in a job advertisement seemed to impact on only one aspect of Interviewee IM Fairness (Image Enhancement). Maybe the organization's IM attempts in the advertisement were seen as not being deliberately misleading, thereby only perceptions of the

¹ The three regression analyses were also carried out with transformed variables where transformation enhanced normality (as per the criteria above): Sqrt Interviewee Enhancement, Rsqrt Interviewer Manipulation, and Sqrt Job Interviews. These analyses yielded the same results as those reported for the untransformed variables, except that, in step 2, the prediction of Interviewee Manipulation by Country did not reach significance ($p=.055$).

fairness of equivalent interviewee IM behaviors being affected. The use of alternative manipulations of Organizational IM would be required for examination of the generality of the present results - such as its manipulation in simulated interviews for jobs that vary in the degree to which the ability to use IM is job-relevant (see Ellis et al., 2002) - a factor which could impact on candidate perceptions of Interviewee IM fairness.

On the other hand, conclusions regarding the influence of interview experience must be cautious given its confounding with Country. The relative impact of these two variables is a matter for further research (e.g., comparison of individuals in Portugal and the UK matched on interview experience). With the variables dissociated, it may be pertinent to examine also whether the two variables interact with each other or with dispositional factors to influence perceptions of Interviewee IM Fairness. As for gender, it did not appear to be an antecedent of Interviewee IM Fairness, but future research should consider whether under specific conditions (e.g., if IM tactics associated with gender roles were examined) gender differences in fairness perceptions would surface (see Asdigian, Cohn, & Hennessey-Blum, 1994).

In future, replication of the results using a different method would be particularly useful since the correlation between Interviewee IM Fairness and Interviewer IM Fairness variables could be due to participants striving to be consistent in their answers to the interviewer and interviewee items of the same questionnaire (e.g., due to social desirability). Also, results based on convenience samples of students may not necessarily generalize to the whole population. Additionally, there appeared to be two dimensions to what interviewees regard as fair and unfair IM (Impression Manipulation vs. Image Enhancement), hinging on the extent to which an IM tactic might be used with deliberately deceptive purposes. Future research would need to probe and refine the framework used here for the study of IM fairness.

Despite limitations, the study's results suggest implications for practice, particularly for interventions aiming at influencing candidates to self-regulate their use of IM. Since interviewees seem to believe that the same behaviors tend to be equally (un)fair for themselves and the interviewers to display, and may be influenced by the behavior of organizations in their perceptions of what is fair, they may not respond to attempts at demonstrating the unfairness of some of their IM behaviors whilst the perceived equivalent behaviors by interviewers remain unchallenged and in use (hence a potential source of inequity). This empirically reinforces existing proposals that interventions such as issuing guidelines for interview behavior should tackle the approach of both parties (e.g., Fletcher, 1992b; Kirkwood & Ralston, 1996). In addition, since differences in IM fairness perceptions may stem at least partially from interview experience, "educating" the parties regarding IM behavior may have best results if done before they are

socialized into what appears to be the common undesirable use of IM in interviews (e.g., Fletcher, 1992b; Kirkwood & Ralston, 1996). Alternatively, individual organizations may want to communicate to their candidates (and staff) what they would consider to be fair for both parties to do as candidates (and staff) may have had varied experiences previously, hence diverse perceptions of what will be acceptable on their part.

Cultural and personality differences may also need considering when devising interventions to influence candidate IM behavior. These could vary in receptivity and effectiveness depending on individuals' culturally bound IM fairness perceptions and Machiavellianism. For instance, there may be ceiling effects to what individuals from given cultural groups and personality types will consider as (un)fair. Linked with this, there may also be instances where combining strategies for regulating IM in interviews is appropriate. For instance, in cultures where self-assertion is less valued and IM is perceived to be less fair, the effectiveness of strategies to control the types of IM tactics used by candidates through interviewer behavior (Ellis et al., 2002) may benefit from complementary communication on the part of the organization regarding what is considered fair IM. If done in a way that preserves perceptions of equity, this may influence candidates' perceptions regarding what would be appropriate (fair) IM behavior and may help prepare the ground for interviewees to be more open to displaying the type of IM tactic that selected interviewer behavior will be aiming to elicit.

Finally, results also stimulate consideration of implications for theory. They suggest that interviewees may be equity-sensitive to the IM behavior of interviewers/organizations and may regulate their perceptions of what is fair interviewee IM partly based on this. Given that perceptions of inequity may also lead to behavioral efforts to restore equity (Adams, 1963; 1965), it may be appropriate to explore the extent to which the regulation of IM behavior based on the monitoring of IM audiences (Bozeman & Kacmar, 1997) comprises an element of regulation of behavior to maintain equity.

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Appendix A**NoIM Advertisement used in the Study****UniMedia****Graduate Opportunities**

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