Examining the Impact of Self-Promotion on Job Interviews: A Case Study of Malaysian Fresh Graduate Teachers

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine how a particular cohort of applicants, who were seeking teaching positions in an international school were working with students experiencing learning difficulties, responded to the job interview question "why should we hire you." By analyzing their responses, the aim was to understand how these teachers engaged in self-promotion to create a favorable impression of the interviewer. A qualitative research approach was utilised to analyse the data collected, which consisted of interviews conducted with five successful candidates. The findings of this study indicated that these candidates encountered challenges in effectively demonstrating self-promotion during their job interviews, despite being ultimately successful in obtaining positions. Furthermore, the results revealed a lack of confidence among the candidates, potentially stemming from their limited proficiency in employing appropriate vocabulary to convey their goals and strategies effectively. Based on these findings, it is recommended that the teaching curriculum incorporate self-promotion techniques to better equip undergraduate students for job interviews and enable them to effectively respond to standard interview questions, thus allowing them to showcase their capabilities more confidently and successfully.

Contribution/Originality: The study underscores the need for teaching self-promotion in employment modules to boost fresh graduates' job prospects. By equipping students with effective self-promotion skills, instructors can empower them for success in job interviews and contribute to comprehensive educational strategies for the job market's challenges and opportunities.
1. Introduction

In today's dynamic job market, the job interview plays a pivotal role in the recruitment process. A job interview is a formal conversation between a job seeker and a potential employer, allowing both parties to assess each other’s suitability for a specific position. As emerging trends reshape the employment landscape, job interviews have become increasingly important, particularly for Malaysian fresh graduates. The significance of job interviews in the context of current trends and offers insights to help Malaysian fresh graduates navigate this crucial stage of their careers (Kok, Krishnan, Ramiah, & Baskaran, 2022).

The current job market is experiencing significant changes due to technological advancements, globalisation, and evolving industry requirements. As automation and artificial intelligence redefine traditional roles, employers seek candidates who possess adaptable skills, critical thinking abilities, and a strong cultural fit within their organisations. Job interviews serve as a platform to evaluate these qualities, enabling employers to select candidates who can thrive in the rapidly evolving professional landscape (Krishnan, Ramalingam, Hee & Maruthan, 2017).

Job interviews provide fresh graduates with an opportunity to showcase their competencies and soft skills beyond what can be presented in a resume. While academic qualifications are essential, employers now prioritise a broader skill set that includes effective communication, problem-solving, teamwork, and adaptability. Malaysian fresh graduates can use job interviews to emphasise their technical skills while also highlighting their ability to learn quickly and contribute positively to a dynamic work environment (Krishnan, & Srinivasss, 2014).

In recent years, employers have recognised the importance of cultural fit within organisations. They seek candidates who align with their company values, work ethic, and vision. Job interviews allow employers to gauge the candidate’s cultural fit and assess their emotional intelligence, the ability to understand and manage emotions in oneself and others (Roulin, 2016). Malaysian fresh graduates can prepare for interviews by researching the company’s culture, values, and recent initiatives to demonstrate their enthusiasm for the organisation’s mission.

Emerging trends such as remote work, flexible schedules, and virtual collaborations have transformed the way businesses operate. Employers increasingly seek candidates who can adapt to these trends and excel in remote or hybrid work environments. Job interviews offer fresh graduates an opportunity to showcase their experience with virtual collaboration tools, remote project management, and self-motivation. Demonstrating proficiency in navigating these emerging trends can significantly enhance their employability (Su-Hie, Érnisa, Kee-Man, Jecky & Collin, 2017).

In the ever-changing job market, employers value candidates who display industry awareness and stay updated on relevant trends, technologies, and challenges. Malaysian fresh graduates can leverage job interviews to demonstrate their knowledge of the industry and its current landscape. They can research recent industry developments, highlight relevant coursework or projects, and express their eagerness to contribute to the industry’s growth.
In the face of emerging trends and evolving job market dynamics, job interviews have become increasingly crucial for Malaysian fresh graduates. By recognising the changing landscape of employment, showcasing their competencies and soft skills, emphasising cultural fit and emotional intelligence, embracing emerging trends, and demonstrating industry awareness, fresh graduates can stand out and secure desirable positions. The job interview provides a platform for candidates to present themselves holistically, proving their potential to succeed in a rapidly evolving professional world. With adequate preparation and a proactive approach, Malaysian fresh graduates can maximize their chances of securing their dream jobs (Su-Hie et al., 2017).

Impression management tactics (Goffman, 1959) (hereafter IMT) play a crucial role in the current emerging trends of job interviews among Malaysian fresh graduates. With the rapidly changing job market and increasing competition, it has become essential for fresh graduates to effectively demonstrate their unique value and potential to prospective employers (Stephanie & Tricia, 2012). By utilizing IMT, such as presenting oneself confidently, showcasing relevant skills and experiences, and effectively communicating personal strengths, Malaysian fresh graduates can create a positive and memorable impression during job interviews. These tactics allow them to stand out in a crowded applicant pool and align themselves with the evolving needs of employers in areas like adaptability, critical thinking, and cultural fit. By mastering IMT, fresh graduates in Malaysia can enhance their employability and increase their chances of securing desirable positions in the face of emerging trends in job interviews (Stevens & Kristof, 1995).

However, there were several issues highlighted that many fresh graduates in Malaysia often lack the necessary skills to effectively demonstrate impression management tactics, particularly when it comes to self-promotion during job interviews. One key aspect is their ability to effectively showcase their achievements, skills, and experiences in a confident and articulate manner. Oftentimes, fresh graduates may underestimate the importance of highlighting their accomplishments and may struggle to communicate their strengths effectively. This can result in missed opportunities to create a positive impression and convince employers of their suitability for the job (MHEM, 2019).

Additionally, many fresh graduates in Malaysia may face challenges in effectively presenting their unique value proposition to potential employers. They may struggle to articulate their strengths and differentiate themselves from other candidates. Self-promotion requires a delicate balance of confidence and humility, and it is crucial for fresh graduates to learn how to effectively communicate their strengths without appearing arrogant or boastful. Developing the ability to strategically promote oneself during job interviews is essential in order to stand out in a competitive job market and secure desirable positions. By enhancing their self-promotion skills, fresh graduates in Malaysia can significantly improve their chances of making a positive and lasting impression on potential employers (Ahmed, Hayfaa & Sandra, 2019).

Therefore, the present study was aimed to investigate how these teachers engaged in self-promotion in order to create a favourable impression on the interviewer.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Definition of IMT
IMT refer to the conscious or unconscious strategies that individuals employ to shape or control the impressions others have of them (Goffman, 1959; Schlenker, 1980). These tactics are used to create a favourable image, influence perceptions, and manage how others perceive and evaluate them. Here are some common IMT as can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1: Definitions of IMT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Impression Management Tactics</th>
<th>Definitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-Presentation</td>
<td>Individuals consciously present themselves in a particular way to create a desired impression. They may dress, speak, or behave in ways that align with the image they want to project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-promotion</td>
<td>People highlight their accomplishments, skills, or positive attributes to gain recognition and enhance their image. They may share success stories, achievements, or relevant experiences to impress others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ingratiation</td>
<td>This tactic involves using flattery, praise, or conforming to others’ opinions to win favor and gain social acceptance. Individuals may seek to build relationships and be perceived as likable by aligning themselves with others’ values and beliefs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Suppression or Enhancement</td>
<td>Individuals may selectively hide or downplay certain information or behaviors (suppression) that could create a negative impression, while emphasising or exaggerating positive aspects (enhancement).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-deprecation</td>
<td>By making light of their weaknesses, mistakes, or flaws, individuals can appear humble, relatable, and approachable. This tactic can help build rapport and reduce the perception of arrogance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Association</td>
<td>People may associate themselves with individuals, groups, or symbols that have positive connotations. By leveraging the positive reputation or image of others, they seek to enhance their own standing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonverbal cues</td>
<td>Facial expressions, body language, and tone of voice can greatly influence how others perceive someone. Individuals may use nonverbal cues consciously to convey confidence, empathy, or sincerity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social media management</td>
<td>In the digital age, managing one’s online presence is crucial. People carefully curate their social media profiles, selectively sharing information and images that present them in a favorable light.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 describes that in job interviews, IMT are crucial for shaping how candidates are perceived by employers and greatly influencing their chances of securing employment. Self-presentation is vital, allowing individuals to align their image with the desired job through appropriate dressing, confident speaking, and professional behaviour (Fletcher,
Furthermore, self-promotion plays an important role in highlighting relevant accomplishments, skills, and positive attributes, effectively demonstrating qualifications for the job. Ingratiation helps build rapport with interviewers by expressing interest in the company, praising its achievements, and aligning with its values.

Strategic suppression or enhancement of information allows candidates to emphasise strengths while downplaying weaknesses, effectively managing the overall impression they create (Greenberger, Lessard, Chen, & Farruggia, 2008). Appropriately using self-deprecation demonstrates humility and relatability, while association leverages positive connotations by highlighting affiliations with respected individuals, groups, or symbols. Nonverbal cues, such as maintaining eye contact, confident body language, and appropriate tone of voice, convey confidence, empathy, and sincerity. Effective social media management is also crucial, as employers often research candidates online. By curating their online presence and sharing relevant information, candidates can present themselves favourably and align their online image with the desired job. In summary, these IMT significantly impact how candidates are perceived during job interviews, increasing their chances of leaving a positive and memorable impression on potential employers (Goffman, 1972).

2.2. Importance of IMT in Job Interviews

According to Goffman (1959; 1972), IMT play a significant role in job interviews as they can greatly influence how candidates are perceived by hiring managers and potentially impact their chances of being offered the job (Jacobs, 2003). Here’s why IMT are important in job interviews:

Creating a favourable first impression, the initial impression formed by the interviewer can have a lasting impact. By employing IMT such as dressing professionally, maintaining good posture, and displaying confidence, candidates can create a positive first impression that sets the tone for the rest of the interview.

Highlighting relevant skills and experiences, IMT allow candidates to showcase their qualifications and experiences effectively. Through self-promotion and selective self-presentation, candidates can emphasize their relevant skills, achievements, and experiences that align with the requirements of the job. This can increase the likelihood of being perceived as a strong fit for the position.

Demonstrating enthusiasm and motivation, expressing genuine enthusiasm for the job and the company can leave a positive impression on the interviewer. Candidates can employ IMT such as active listening, asking insightful questions, and displaying a positive attitude to convey their interest, motivation, and dedication.

Managing potential weaknesses or gaps, everyone has areas of improvement or gaps in their experience. IMT can help candidates address these areas by using strategies like acknowledging shortcomings honestly, highlighting efforts to learn and grow, or redirecting the focus toward other strengths and relevant qualities.

Building rapport and likability, building rapport with the interviewer is essential in establishing a positive connection. IMT such as using appropriate humor, displaying
warmth and friendliness, and engaging in active listening can help candidates foster a positive and likable image.

Demonstrating professionalism and cultural fit, the job interviews provide an opportunity to showcase professionalism and the ability to fit into the company culture. By employing IMT like adapting communication style, aligning values and behaviors, and demonstrating respect for the organisation’s mission and values, candidates can enhance their perceived fit within the company.

However, it is crucial to strike a balance between employing IMT and being authentic. Overusing tactics or resorting to manipulation can backfire if the candidate is perceived as inauthentic or insincere. It’s important to present oneself honestly while leveraging IMT to highlight strengths and fit for the job.

2.3. Theoretical Framework

2.3.1. Self-Promotion

Self-promotion refers to the act of promoting or advertising oneself or one’s accomplishments, skills, or personal brand to gain visibility, recognition, or opportunities. It involves actively highlighting one’s positive qualities, achievements, or talents in order to create a favorable impression on others and increase one’s chances of success in various domains, such as career, business, or social interactions (Rudman, 1998).

Whilst, self-promotion in job interviews refers to the act of highlighting and showcasing your skills, qualifications, achievements, and relevant experiences to present yourself as a strong candidate for a particular position. It involves effectively communicating your strengths, abilities, and accomplishments to convince the interviewer that you are the right fit for the job (Goffman, 1959). There are some key aspects of self-promotion in job interviews, see Table 2.

Table 2: Aspects of Self-Promotion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Self-Promotion</th>
<th>Definitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Highlighting relevant skills</td>
<td>Identify the key skills and qualifications required for the job and emphasise those that you possess. Provide specific examples of how you have successfully applied those skills in previous roles or projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Showcasing achievements</td>
<td>Talk about notable accomplishments from your past experiences that are relevant to the position you are interviewing for. Discuss how you contributed to achieving specific goals, overcoming challenges, or making a positive impact.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Demonstrating expertise</td>
<td>Share your knowledge and expertise in the field or industry related to the job. Discuss any certifications, training programs, or specialized skills you have acquired that make you stand out from other candidates.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Communicating effectively

Clearly articulate your ideas, thoughts, and experiences during the interview. Use concise and persuasive language to convey your qualifications and convince the interviewer of your suitability for the role.

Providing examples

Use specific examples and anecdotes to illustrate your skills and experiences. These examples should highlight your problem-solving abilities, leadership qualities, teamwork skills, or any other relevant attributes.

Confidence without arrogance

While it's important to promote yourself, strike a balance between confidence and humility. Avoid being overly boastful or arrogant, as it may create a negative impression. Focus on presenting your strengths and abilities in a positive and genuine manner.

Active listening and engagement

While promoting yourself, also pay attention to the interviewer's questions and engage in active listening. This shows your interest in the conversation and demonstrates your ability to collaborate effectively.

Goffman (1959) noted that self-promotion should be based on facts, evidence, and real experiences. It is important to be authentic and honest throughout the interview process. By effectively showcasing your qualifications and demonstrating your suitability for the role, you increase your chances of making a positive impression on the interviewer.

As mentioned earlier, it is commonly observed that many fresh graduates in Malaysia often lack the necessary skills to effectively promote themselves during job interviews, particularly in the context of Information, Media, and Technology (IMT) roles. These fresh graduates struggle to confidently showcase their achievements, skills, and experiences, often underestimating the importance of highlighting their accomplishments. Consequently, they face difficulties in creating a positive impression and differentiating themselves from other candidates. Developing self-promotion skills is crucial for standing out in a competitive job market and making a lasting impression on potential employers. Therefore, this study aims to investigate whether the lack of self-promotion skills is indeed a prevailing issue among fresh graduates or if there are other skills that they tend to overlook. By identifying the root causes, this study seeks to find suitable solutions to address these challenges effectively, see Figure 1.

A theoretical framework called IMT-Self-Promotion can greatly assist Malaysian fresh graduates in effectively promoting themselves. This framework aids in comprehending job requirements and how self-promotion can be utilized by fresh graduates or undergraduates to prepare for job interviews. By using the framework, graduates can organise their responses and effectively showcase their problem-solving skills (Goffman, 1959; 1972). Additionally, it helps in identifying transferable skills, allowing them to demonstrate their adaptability and potential for making valuable contributions. The framework also places emphasis on professionalism, including attire, posture, and confidence. By tailoring their responses to the specific company and role, graduates can showcase their genuine interest and commitment. Overall, this framework provides structure, facilitates self-promotion, and emphasizes key attributes, enabling fresh
graduates to stand out and significantly increase their chances of success in job interviews.

Figure 1: Overview of Theoretical Framework

2.4. Past Studies

In the realm of corporate communications, the importance of IMR (Intended Meaning of the Message) and effective self-presentation becomes apparent. Debbie's (2008) study on the distortion of narratives and manipulation of graphs in corporate annual reports highlights the significance of conveying the intended meaning for successful IMT (Intended Meaning Transmission). This finding resonates with Ahmad's (2011) exploration of linguistic expressions and strategic tactics used by interviewees to capture the interest of interviewers. By skillfully utilizing linking phrases, these studies collectively underscore the crucial role of communication techniques and self-presentation strategies in corporate contexts.

Shifting our focus to the psychological aspects of self-presentation and behaviour, Sonja and Susan's (1995) research on negative thinking, interpersonal problem-solving, rumination, depression, and self-focused behavior offers valuable insights. Their findings demonstrate that individuals with high levels of anxiety often anticipate negative outcomes in their daily activities, which leads to self-focused behavior. Liao and Richard's (2002) study complements this understanding by investigating the relationship between self-centeredness, anxiety, and performance in sports settings. They reveal that an individual's reaction to stress can either enhance or reduce anxiety, depending on their self-centered focus. By incorporating appropriate academic phrases, it becomes evident that these studies provide a deeper comprehension of the complex interplay between negative thinking, anxiety, self-focused behavior, and their implications for psychological well-being.
Examining the broader scope of self-presentation and its impact on various domains, Madzhi’s (2008) assessment of self-regulated learning and discipline in achieving excellence in music education stands out. By effectively incorporating academic phrases, this research contributes to our understanding of self-presentation and behavior. Furthermore, the synthesis of multiple studies highlights the significance of disciplined self-regulation as a crucial factor in achieving success. This emphasis on self-regulation aligns with the broader theme of self-presentation, where individuals strive to maintain and present their qualities in a positive light to achieve favorable outcomes.

Several recent research studies have been conducted to evaluate the competencies and employability of business graduates in Malaysia. One study conducted by Tanius, Johari, Yulia, Heng and Pazim (2019) focused on assessing the importance of graduates’ communication abilities, particularly in English, in determining their suitability for employment. The findings of this study indicated that effective communication skills played a significant role in determining employability. Another study by Rahman et al. (2019) aimed to understand how managers perceived the communication skills of newly graduated students. The researchers examined the perspectives of managers regarding the communication abilities of graduates.

In a study conducted by Kenayathulla, Ahmad and Idris (2019) the researchers investigated the gaps between the skills possessed by graduates and the skills deemed important for jobs in Malaysia. The study aimed to identify disparities between the capabilities of graduates and the demands of the job market. Majid et al. (2020) focused on evaluating the job capabilities of students in public higher-education institutions in Malaysia. The study aimed to assess the readiness of these students for employment. These studies utilized various methodologies, including ANOVA, descriptive analysis, and SEM tests, to analyze and interpret the data gathered. Furthermore, a study conducted by Kok et al. (2022) examined the impact of intercultural communication in job interviews among fresh graduates in Malaysia. The study revealed that candidates with poor intercultural communication skills struggled to effectively present themselves and demonstrate positive qualities, which hindered their chances of securing a job.

Overall, the findings from these studies underscore the significance of effective communication skills, particularly in English, in addressing the challenges faced by Malaysian graduates and enhancing their employability. Proficiency in appropriate expressions and communication techniques proves to be valuable, especially during job interviews and the assessment of employability abilities and IMT.

2.5. Research Gap

The studies discussed shed light on the importance of effective communication skills, self-regulation, and employability among graduates. However, there appears to be a gap in the attention given to the role of self-promotion in these contexts. Self-promotion refers to the ability to showcase one’s skills, accomplishments, and qualities in a positive light. It plays a crucial role in conveying the intended meaning of messages, capturing the interest of interviewers, and enhancing one’s chances of employability.

3. Methodology

A qualitative research methodology was employed in this study, after obtaining consent from both the school administration and the participating candidates. The study
comprised ten individuals who had completed their bachelor’s degrees from various public and private institutions, specialising in fields such as TESL, Malay Studies, Business Studies, Arts, and Sociology. These candidates had applied for teaching positions at an international school situated in the Klang Valley. The selection of participants was based on their resumes and their ability to meet the requirements specified in the job advertisement. The school conducted open interviews for positions in English, Malay, Business, and other subjects, targeting recent graduates with a bachelor’s degree in the relevant field and a minimum of 6 months of practicum experience. The interviews took place on the school premises and were conducted by the school principal, with each interview lasting approximately 25-30 minutes. The principal obtained verbal consent from the candidates and recorded the interviews. Later, the interview data were transcribed and analyzed using Goffman’s (1959) framework of impression management theory (IMT), specifically focusing on the aspect of self-promotion. According to Creswell (2022), qualitative studies can achieve data saturation with a sample size ranging from 5 to 55. Therefore, due to the terms and conditions imposed on the principal by the school director, only data from five successful candidates were allowed to be given to the researcher. The status of the remaining five candidates (whether they were unsuccessful or reserved) is unknown. Thus, for analysis purposes, data from five candidates (referred to as C1, C2, C3, C4, and C5) were considered. The research theme of this study revolved around the question of “why should we hire you,” based on standard interview questions. To ensure reliability, the transcribed interview data were verified by experts, and NVivo software was employed for data categorization. The selection of these five candidates was based on the study objectives and the emergence of relevant data.

4. Analysis

The analysis has been divided into two sections: Section 4.1 focuses on the utilization of self-promotion aspects by five candidates, while Section 4.2 provides an analysis of the excerpts.

4.1. Utilization of self-Promotion Aspects

Table 3 shows the use of self-Promotion aspects of the candidates in job interviews.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Self-Promotion Aspects</th>
<th>C1</th>
<th>C2</th>
<th>C3</th>
<th>C4</th>
<th>C5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Highlighting relevant skills</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Showcasing achievements</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Demonstrating expertise</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communicating effectively</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Providing examples</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Confidence without arrogance</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Active listening and engagement</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 depicts the utilization of self-promotion aspects by five candidates during their respective job interviews. The findings reveal that candidates C2 and C5 exhibited suboptimal aptitude in showcasing the relevant skills in comparison to C1, C3, and C4. However, C4’s demonstration of achievements was comparatively inadequate when contrasted with the other candidates. Additionally, C3 excelled in effectively showcasing
their expertise compared to the remaining candidates. Conversely, C1 and C3 were found to have deficiencies in effective communication, unlike their counterparts. Concerning the aspect of confidence without arrogance, C1, C3, and C5 were observed to have shortcomings in contrast to the confident demeanor of C2 and C4. Lastly, all candidates fell short in adequately addressing the dimensions of listening and engagement. The self-promotion demonstrations of Cs 1-5, have been analyzed as follows:

4.2. Analysis of the Excerpts

The utterances from C1 adeptly encompassed several facets of self-promotion. Firstly, C1 adeptly highlighted pertinent skills by emphasizing the applicant's proficiency in effectively communicating with students, a critical ability in teaching that facilitated efficient information dissemination and student engagement. Secondly, the statement effectively showcased achievements by delineating C1’s voluntary work in assisting children who faced challenges in comprehending mathematical fundamentals. This showcased C1’s proactive approach to student support and his/her positive impact on learning outcomes. Thirdly, the statement cogently demonstrated expertise by referencing C1’s attainment of a Bachelor's degree in mathematics from the esteemed University of XXX, underscoring a strong foundational knowledge and a high level of qualification in the field. Furthermore, the statement communicated effectively through its coherent and well-structured presentation, utilizing concise language that ensured efficient message conveyance.

First of all, I would like to apply for this job as I am passionate about teaching students and also am (1) capable of communicating with them well. This is because in the past, I have (5) volunteered to help out children who have struggled to understand the basic knowledge in mathematics. I am a very patient person and will always try my best to ensure that my students fully understand the concept I am teaching. In my last teaching experiences, I managed to (2) actively involve all the students in class discussions and exercises. I managed to do this by anonymously choosing students to answer questions therefore, everyone is equally contributing. I studied at the University of XXX, receiving a (3)Bachelor’s degree in mathematics. Most of my associates agree that I am also an (6) amiable person who can mingle with the students easily. It would be a great pleasure to have the opportunity to teach young minds to prepare them for their futures ahead. I hope that you can consider my qualifications and personal qualities that can be seen in a good teacher.

Candidate 1

Moreover, the statement furnished an illustrative example of C1’s teaching methodology, citing the technique of involving all students in class discussions and exercises through anonymous selection for question answering. This inclusive approach fostered equitable participation and contributed to the creation of an inclusive learning environment. Additionally, the statement exuded confidence without arrogance, deftly highlighting qualifications and skills while maintaining a focus on the benefits the applicant could offer students in his/her educational journey. This humble and student-centric approach accentuated C1's commitment to providing exceptional teaching experiences.
Lastly, although not explicitly mentioned, the statement implied C1’s unwavering dedication to active listening and engagement. The reference to his/her patience in ensuring students grasped concepts conveyed a genuine willingness to attentively listen and support learners throughout their educational endeavours.

Overall, C1 eloquently encompassed the various aspects of self-promotion. It effectively highlighted relevant skills, showcased notable achievements, demonstrated expertise, communicated with precision, provided illustrative examples, and maintained a confident yet humble tone. Furthermore, it implied an ardent commitment to active listening and engagement, underscoring the applicant’s unwavering dedication to facilitating student learning and growth.

Good evening, I am here today to apply for the job as a math teacher in this school. I am a very caring teacher who considers the student’s opinions and prioritizes respect. In order to learn effectively, we must always have mutual respect for each other. I have been teaching for 4 years already and am capable of identifying my students’ weaknesses and areas to improve on. Recently, I have just completed my Bachelor degree in mathematics or elementary education. I am the most suitable candidate for this job as I am an organised individual who will always update the students’ progress. I am looking forward to meeting and teaching more students in the future. Candidate 2

The provided excerpts from C2 covered several aspects of self-promotion. Firstly, the statement highlighted relevant skills by emphasizing C2’s caring nature and consideration for student opinions, which were essential qualities for fostering a respectful and conducive learning environment. Secondly, the mention of four years of teaching experience showcased the applicant’s achievements in the field and their ability to identify students’ weaknesses and areas for improvement. This demonstrated a level of expertise and competence in understanding and addressing students’ needs. Furthermore, the completion of a Bachelor’s degree in mathematics or elementary education underscored the applicant’s commitment to professional development and signified a level of expertise in the subject matter. This academic accomplishment highlighted the qualifications and knowledge C2 brought to the role. The statement effectively communicated the applicant’s intentions and qualifications in a clear and straightforward manner. It conveyed confidence without arrogance, presenting the applicant as a suitable candidate for the job without excessive self-promotion. While the statement lacked specific examples to illustrate teaching methods or approaches, it implied a commitment to active listening and engagement by emphasizing the importance of mutual respect and considering student opinions. However, it did not provide explicit examples or strategies for active listening.

In summary, C2 addressed several self-promotion aspects by highlighting relevant skills, showcasing achievements through teaching experience, demonstrating expertise through academic qualifications, and communicating effectively. However, it could have benefited from providing specific examples and strategies for active listening to further enhance the overall self-promotion.

I believe that I am suited to this position because I focus on the students’ success through an inclusive, safe and fun learning environment. My qualifications show that I have a strong foundation to be capable of
teaching them the essential skills needed in mathematics. In the past, I have managed to consistently help out a learning impaired student to keep up with the rest of the class and gain the same amount of knowledge as everyone else. I am a dedicated person who will willingly assist the students in any way possible to improve their learning. I am also open-minded to new ideas. Thank you for taking the time to consider my suitability to your school. Candidate 3

Based on the seven aspects of self-promotion, C3 effectively covered several of them. The first aspect, highlighting relevant skills, was addressed in the statement where the person focused on students’ success through an inclusive, safe, and fun learning environment. This indicated his/her dedication and commitment to creating a positive educational experience. The second aspect, showcasing achievements, was demonstrated when they mentioned their ability to help a learning impaired student keep up with the class and gain knowledge on par with his/her peers. This accomplishment highlighted their effectiveness as an educator. The third aspect, demonstrating expertise, was implied when C3 mentioned their qualifications and strong foundation in teaching essential mathematical skills. This indicated his/her competency in the subject matter. The fifth aspect, providing examples, was covered when C3 mentioned his/her success in helping a learning impaired student. This example showcased their ability to support and facilitate the learning process. The sixth aspect, confidence without arrogance, was evident in his/her statement of being dedicated and open-minded to new ideas. This reflected a positive attitude and willingness to adapt and grow. However, the excerpts did not explicitly address the fourth aspect, communicating effectively, or the seventh aspect, active listening and engagement. These areas could have been further developed to strengthen the overall self-promotion.

In summary, C3 effectively covered several aspects of self-promotion. C3 highlighted relevant skills, showcased achievements, demonstrated expertise, provided examples, and conveyed confidence without arrogance. However, C3 did not explicitly address effective communication or active listening and engagement. These areas could have been further developed to strengthen the overall self-promotion.

In my opinion, I am a good fit teacher for your school due to my experience and commitment to teaching over the years. I can apply different techniques to help out my students and ensure a more fun learning experience. This way the students can stay attentive in class which will help them improve even more over time. I communicate with others easily because I frequently interacted with other people in my past jobs. I hope you will choose me to be a teacher in your school. Candidate 4

C4 effectively covered several aspects of self-promotion. C4 emphasized his/her commitment to teaching over the years, indicating their experience in the field. C4 also mentioned his/her ability to apply different techniques to make learning more enjoyable, showing their adaptability and willingness to cater to the needs of their students. By stating their proficiency in communicating with others due to past job experiences, C4 highlighted his/her interpersonal skills, which were crucial for effective teaching. However, C4 could have benefited from further examples to provide tangible evidence of his/her teaching abilities. Additionally, C4 demonstrated
confidence in his/her skills without arrogance (6), projecting a positive image. Although C4 did not explicitly mention active listening and engagement (7), C4 indirectly implied it through his/her focus on creating a fun and attentive learning environment for students. Overall, C4 effectively addressed several aspects of self-promotion, demonstrating their suitability as a teacher for the school.

In conclusion, C4 effectively covered several aspects of self-promotion, showcasing C4’s experience, commitment, ability to apply different teaching techniques, and effective communication skills. C4 demonstrated confidence without arrogance and indirectly implied their commitment to active listening and engagement through their emphasis on creating a fun and attentive learning experience. However, C4 could have benefited from the inclusion of specific examples to further support their claims. Overall, C4 presented himself/herself as a strong candidate for a teaching position in the school.

I am applying for a teaching position in your prestigious school. As you may have seen in my resume, I have been (2) teaching for the past 8 years in 2 different international schools. My credentials have demonstrated a solid background to teach the fundamentals math abilities they need after primary school. In the past, I have successfully (5) increased the average score of the classes exam percentage by 10%. Compared to other teachers I have seen, (4) I am a committed individual that will help pupils in any way to enhance their learning. (6) I also consider others’ thoughts and feelings when teaching. Thank you. Candidate 5

The provided excerpts from C5 effectively covered several aspects of self-promotion. C5 highlighted relevant skills by mentioning their teaching experience in international schools and their ability to teach fundamental math abilities after primary school. Additionally, C5 showcased achievements by stating his/her successful track record of increasing exam scores by 10% in their classes. This demonstrated C5’s expertise and competence in the field. C5 communicated effectively by expressing his/her commitment to helping pupils and enhancing their learning, indicating their dedication and passion for teaching. C5 provided an example of his/her achievement, adding credibility to his/her claims. The tone of the excerpts conveyed confidence without arrogance, emphasizing their willingness to support students rather than boasting about his/her own abilities. While C5 did not explicitly mention active listening and engagement, the mention of considering others’ thoughts and feelings when teaching suggested a focus on creating an inclusive learning environment.

Overall, C5 effectively covered most of the self-promotion aspects, showcasing the applicant’s skills, achievements, expertise, effective communication, examples, and a confident yet humble approach.

As for the limited English language proficiency, it was found that Cs1-5 and the use of limited proficiency in terms of vocabulary, it appears that the candidates’ self-promotion statements varied in their use of vocabulary complexity.

Cs 1 and 3 were praised for effectively covering several aspects of self-promotion, despite the limited use of advanced vocabulary. Their statements focused on highlighting relevant skills, showcasing achievements, demonstrating expertise, providing examples, and conveying confidence without arrogance. While they may not
have employed intricate vocabulary, they successfully communicated their qualifications and commitment to teaching.

Cs2 and 4 were also considered to have addressed various aspects of self-promotion, but their statements lacked specific examples and strategies for active listening. Although they effectively communicated their intentions and qualifications, the limited proficiency in terms of vocabulary may have affected the overall impact of their statements.

C5 was commended for effectively covering most of the self-promotion aspects, including highlighting relevant skills, showcasing achievements, demonstrating expertise, effective communication, providing an example, and presenting a confident yet humble approach. Despite using simpler vocabulary, C5 successfully conveyed their qualifications and commitment to enhancing students' learning.

In general, while the use of limited proficiency in terms of vocabulary may have constrained the candidates' ability to express themselves with more nuance and sophistication, it did not prevent them from effectively conveying their qualifications, skills, and dedication to teaching. The candidates' statements were still able to showcase their suitability for the teaching positions; although the impact could have been enhanced with a more varied and advanced vocabulary.

5. Discussion

Based on the analysis of Cs 1-5, it becomes evident that C1 effectively showcased various aspects of self-promotion in their statement. They skillfully emphasized their proficiency in communication, recognizing its importance in teaching. Furthermore, they provided evidence of their proactive approach to student support by mentioning their voluntary work assisting children with mathematical challenges. This demonstrated their positive impact on learning outcomes. C1 also established their expertise through their Bachelor's degree in mathematics from a prestigious university, which served as a strong foundation for their knowledge in the field. The statement was well-structured and effectively conveyed the message using concise language. This aligns with the findings of Debbie (2008) and Ahmad (2011), which emphasize the importance of conveying intended meaning and employing strategic tactics to capture the interest of the audience or interviewers. It is evident that effective self-promotion and communication techniques play a crucial role in various contexts, including corporate communications and job interviews.

Moving on to C2, their statement addressed several aspects of self-promotion but had room for improvement. They highlighted their caring nature and consideration for student opinions, which are important qualities for creating a respectful learning environment. Additionally, their four years of teaching experience demonstrated their achievements and ability to identify students' weaknesses. However, the statement lacked specific examples and strategies for active listening, which could have provided more tangible evidence of their teaching abilities.

As for C3, they effectively covered several aspects of self-promotion in their statement. They highlighted their dedication to creating a positive learning environment, emphasizing inclusivity, safety, and fun. By mentioning their experience in helping a learning impaired student, they showcased their ability to support and facilitate the
learning process. They also demonstrated expertise through their qualifications and strong foundation in teaching essential mathematical skills. However, the statement could have provided more specific examples and strategies for active listening. C4 emphasized their commitment to teaching and adaptability in their statement. They mentioned their ability to apply different techniques to make learning enjoyable, showcasing their flexibility in catering to students' needs. However, the statement lacked specific examples to support their teaching abilities and strategies for active listening.

Moving on to C5, they effectively covered several aspects of self-promotion in their statement. They highlighted their teaching experience in international schools and their ability to teach fundamental math abilities. C5 showcased their achievements by mentioning their successful track record of increasing exam scores in their classes. The statement effectively communicated their commitment to helping pupils and enhancing their learning. While C5 did not explicitly mention active listening and engagement, their focus on considering others' thoughts and feelings indicated a commitment to inclusivity. The findings of C4 and C5, incorporated with the studies of Madzhi (2008) on self-regulated learning and discipline in music education, highlight the significance of disciplined self-regulation for achieving excellence as well as self-promotion. This aligns with the broader theme of self-presentation and self-promotion, where individuals strive to maintain and present their positive qualities.

When evaluating the language proficiency of Cs 1-5 based on their statements, it is apparent that there is a common theme of limited vocabulary usage among them. While their statements effectively conveyed their qualifications and commitment to teaching, there was a lack of advanced vocabulary that could have added nuance and sophistication to their self-promotion.

Cs 1, 3, 4, and 5 demonstrated a limited use of advanced vocabulary throughout their statements. While their language was clear and concise, a more varied vocabulary could have enhanced their self-promotion by providing a more sophisticated and eloquent portrayal of their qualifications and skills. C2, in addition to a limited vocabulary, had areas where the statement could have been further developed. The lack of specific examples and strategies for active listening limited the impact of the self-promotion, and a more diverse range of vocabulary could have compensated for this shortcoming.

Despite the limited use of advanced vocabulary, it is important to acknowledge that Cs 1-5 were still able to effectively convey their qualifications, skills, and dedication to teaching. Their statements showcased their suitability for the teaching positions, but the impact could have been heightened with a more diverse and advanced vocabulary.

It is worth noting that language proficiency is not the sole determining factor of an effective teacher. While a rich vocabulary can enhance communication and expression, teaching skills, dedication, and a student-centered approach are equally important qualities in an educator. The candidates' statements demonstrated their commitment to creating positive learning environments, supporting students, and fostering inclusive classrooms, even with the limited vocabulary they utilized.

In general, Cs 1-5 could have benefited from a more varied and advanced vocabulary to enhance their self-promotion, but their statements still effectively conveyed their qualifications and dedication to teaching. The focus should be on evaluating their
teaching skills, experiences, and approaches, along with language proficiency, when considering their suitability for the teaching positions. The candidates’ use of vocabulary and language could be improved to effectively convey their goals and strategies. While they touched upon the different aspects of self-promotion, their language lacked precision and academic sophistication. They could have utilized more specific and technical terms related to self-promotion, such as "personal branding," "strategic communication," "evidence-based achievements," and "active listening techniques." Additionally, incorporating academic phrases and linking devices could have strengthened the coherence and flow of their statements.

By enhancing their vocabulary and employing appropriate academic phrases, the candidates could have conveyed their ideas with greater clarity and authority. This would have helped establish a more professional and persuasive tone, demonstrating their competence and understanding of the subject matter. Utilizing a wider range of vocabulary and academic phrases can also enhance the overall impact of their self-promotion statements, effectively capturing the attention of potential employers or instructors.

Improving language proficiency and employing appropriate vocabulary are essential for effectively communicating goals, strategies, and achievements in self-promotion. By continuously developing their language skills, candidates can convey their ideas more accurately and confidently, thereby increasing their chances of success in job interviews and other professional contexts.

Regarding limited language proficiency, studies by Kenayathulla et al. (2019) and Kok, Krishnan, Ramiah, and Baskaran (2022) highlight the importance of language proficiency in job interviews. Examining employability and communication skills of graduates in Malaysia, studies by Tanius et al. (2019), Rahman et al. (2019), Kenayathulla et al. (2019), Majid et al. (2020), and Kok et al. (2022) emphasize the significance of effective communication skills, particularly in English, for employability. These studies suggest that graduates with strong communication abilities have better prospects in the job market.

To sum up, taking all of these studies into consideration, it becomes clear that effective self-presentation, communication skills, and language proficiency are essential for achieving success in various professional and educational contexts. The candidates in the discussion could benefit from incorporating the findings of these studies into their self-promotion statements. Enhancing their language proficiency, employing appropriate vocabulary, and utilizing communication techniques can help them effectively convey their qualifications, skills, and dedication to teaching, thereby increasing their chances of success in job interviews and other professional interactions.

6. Implication of the Study

Based on the analysis of self-promotion aspects in the provided examples, there are several implications for job interviews and teaching self-promotion aspects in existing course modules on employment:

**Job Interviews for Fresh Graduates and Undergraduates**: Understanding and effectively utilizing self-promotion aspects can be beneficial for fresh graduates and undergraduates in job interviews. By highlighting relevant skills, showcasing
achievements, demonstrating expertise, providing examples, and maintaining a confident yet humble tone, candidates can present themselves as strong and qualified candidates for the job. Teaching these self-promotion tactics can help students improve their interview performance and increase their chances of securing employment.

**Teaching Self-Promotion to Instructors:** Instructors can play a crucial role in teaching self-promotion aspects to their students. By incorporating self-promotion and IMT into existing course modules on employment, instructors can equip their students with valuable skills for job interviews and professional development. Instructors can emphasise the importance of highlighting relevant skills, showcasing achievements, demonstrating expertise, providing examples, and effectively communicating during interviews. They can also guide students in presenting a confident yet humble image to potential employers.

**Imparting IMT:** Incorporating self-promotion and IMT into existing course modules on employment can provide students with practical tools for managing their professional image. By teaching students how to effectively communicate their skills, accomplishments, and expertise, instructors can help them create a positive impression during job interviews and throughout their careers. This can include teaching students techniques for highlighting their relevant skills, crafting impact resumes and cover letters, leveraging accomplishments, and presenting themselves confidently in various professional settings.

**Enhancing Employment Opportunities:** Teaching self-promotion and IMT can enhance employment opportunities for students. By equipping them with the skills to effectively present themselves and their qualifications, students can stand out in competitive job markets. The ability to promote oneself confidently and authentically can increase their chances of securing job offers and progressing in their careers.

Incorporating self-promotion and IMT into existing course modules on employment can be highly beneficial for fresh graduates, undergraduates, and instructors. By teaching these skills, students can improve their performance in job interviews and increase their employment opportunities. Instructors can play a crucial role in guiding students to effectively present themselves, highlighting their relevant skills and accomplishments, and projecting a confident yet humble image to potential employers.

In addition to the implications mentioned above, it is important to recognise the significance of employing appropriate vocabulary in conveying goals and strategies effectively in self-promotion. Proficiency in using precise and professional language can enhance the impact of self-promotion statements and effectively communicate one's qualifications and capabilities to potential employers.

By utilising vocabulary that is specific to self-promotion and the field of employment, candidates can demonstrate a deep understanding of the subject matter and convey their goals and strategies with clarity and precision. For instance, incorporating terms such as "personal branding," "strategic communication," "evidence-based achievements," and "active listening techniques" can elevate the language and convey a higher level of expertise.

Furthermore, employing academic phrases and linking devices can enhance the coherence and cohesion of self-promotion statements. These include phrases such as "in
In accordance with," "in light of," "as a result," and "therefore." Linking devices help to establish logical connections between ideas, creating a more structured and persuasive argument.

Proficiency in employing appropriate vocabulary not only showcases one’s language skills but also enhances the overall professionalism and credibility of self-promotion efforts. By accurately and effectively expressing their goals and strategies, candidates can create a strong impression on potential employers and present themselves as competent and knowledgeable individuals.

In conclusion, developing proficiency in employing appropriate vocabulary is crucial for effectively conveying goals and strategies in self-promotion. By using precise and professional language, candidates can demonstrate expertise, enhance the impact of their statements, and create a positive impression on potential employers. Incorporating academic phrases and linking devices further enhances the coherence and structure of self-promotion efforts, strengthening the overall communication of goals and strategies.

7. Conclusion

The analysis of the self-promotion aspect from candidates 1-5 reveals their effectiveness in addressing various aspects of self-promotion. Each candidate showcased relevant skills, highlighted achievements, demonstrated expertise, communicated effectively, provided examples, and maintained a confident yet humble tone. However, there were areas for improvement, such as the inclusion of specific examples, strategies for active listening and engagement, and further development of effective communication techniques.

The implications of these findings are significant for job interviews and the teaching of self-promotion in employment modules. By incorporating self-promotion aspects into existing course modules, instructors can equip students with valuable skills for job interviews and professional development. This includes teaching students how to effectively communicate their skills, accomplishments, and expertise, as well as presenting a confident yet humble image. Furthermore, teaching self-promotion can enhance employment opportunities for fresh graduates and undergraduates by enabling them to stand out in competitive job markets.

To further advance this area of study, future research could focus on the impact of explicit instruction in self-promotion tactics on employment outcomes. Longitudinal studies could assess the effectiveness of teaching self-promotion skills on students’ job search success, career advancement, and overall job satisfaction. Additionally, investigating the role of active listening and engagement in self-promotion strategies could provide valuable insights into creating inclusive learning environments and fostering meaningful connections between instructors and students.

In conclusion, the study highlights the importance of teaching self-promotion aspects in employment modules for fresh graduates, undergraduates, and instructors. By equipping students with the skills to effectively self-promote, instructors can empower them to succeed in job interviews and enhance their overall employment prospects. Continued research in this field can contribute to the development of comprehensive and impact educational strategies that prepare students for the challenges and opportunities of the job market.
Ethics Approval and Consent to Participate

Consent was obtained from the respective department and the participants in order to conduct the study, and the participants provided verbal agreement.

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Conflict of Interest

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