Acta de investigación psicológica
ISSN: 2007-4832
ISSN: 2007-4719
Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Facultad de Psicología

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Acta de investigación psicológica, vol. 9, no. 3, 2019, pp. 90-99
Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Facultad de Psicología

DOI: https://doi.org/10.22201/fpsi.20074719e.2019.3.325

ORIGINAL

Validation of the Bolino and Turnley's Impression Management Scale in a Mexican Sample

Validación de la Escala de Manejo de Impresiones de Bolino y Turnley en una Muestra Mexicana

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Received September 31, 2019; Accepted November 5, 2019

Abstract
Impression Management (IM) states that: 1) People know how others perceive them, 2) People attempt to control such perceptions. Bolino and Turnley (1999) developed an IM Scale based on Jones and Pittman's (1982) taxonomy of five strategies: Self-promotion, Ingratiation, Exemplification, Intimidation, and Supplication. The purpose of this study was to validate the IM Scale using a Mexican sample, evaluating reliability scores and dimensionality. A nomological network for IM was performed considering the Five-factor Personality traits, Social desirability, and Sense of control. Results prove adequate internal reliability and confirm the instrument's five factor structure. Our psychometric findings support the premise that IM may overlap with other psychological constructs, providing evidence of its construct validity.

Keywords: Impression Management, Factor Analysis, Validity, Personality, Nomological Network

Resumen
El Manejo de Impresión (MI) se refiere a que: 1) Las personas generalmente saben cómo son percibidas por otras personas, 2) La gente intenta controlar dichas percepciones. Bolino y Turnley (1999) desarrollaron una Escala de MI con base en la taxonomía de Jones y Pittman (1982) de cinco estrategias: Autopromoción, Congraciamiento, Ejemplificación, Intimidación, y Súplica. El objetivo de este estudio fue validar la Escala de MI en una muestra mexicana, evaluando puntajes de consistencia interna y dimensionalidad. Se realizó una red nomológica para el MI considerando los Cinco Factores de Personalidad, Deseabilidad Social, y Control Percibido. Los resultados muestran una consistencia interna adecuada y confirman las cinco estrategias originalmente planteadas. Los hallazgos apoyan la premisa de que el MI incluye otros constructos psicológicos, dando evidencia adicional de su validez de constructo.

Palabras Clave: Manejo de Impresiones, Análisis Factorial, Validez, Personalidad, Red Nomológica

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Impression Management (IM), works on a basic premise: It refers to the idea that people are aware of how others usually perceive and judge them, and it also refers to the means and efforts by which people attempt to control those perceptions (Bolino & Turnley, 2003b; Kacmar, Harris, & Nagy, 2007; Leary & Kowalsky, 1990; Paulhus, 2002; Paulhus & Trapnell, 2008; Rosenfeld, Giacalone, & Riordan, 1995). The purpose of this study was to develop a nomological network for IM and to provide evidence of convergent and divergent validity. A nomological network refers to the ways in which different variables relate to each other hypothetically. In Psychology, it refers to one of the many ways one can achieve construct validity (Borsboom, Cramer, Kient, Scholten & Franic, 2009).

Bolino and Turnley (2003a, 2003b), and Harris, Kacmar, Ziunuska and Shaw (2007), state that the ability to manage and control expressive behaviors is a prerequisite to effective social and interpersonal functioning. They claim that people high on self-monitoring are more likely to observe and control their IM behaviors perceived on situational cues to what an acceptable behavior is, similar to what happens with Social Desirability (SD). According to Nichols (2011), social desirability and IM are clearly correlated, although little has been done as means to link them as part of a conceptual framework. These two concepts could be linked on the premise that SD is based on the premise that individuals make an effort to portray themselves favorably, enhancing his skills, prowess, and social values avoiding social disapproval (Acosta & Dominguez, 2012, 2014; Dominguez & Van de Vijver, 2014; Lalwani, Shrum & Chiu, 2009; Paulhus, 1984, 2002). In this line of reasoning, SD is not a manifestation of a deliberately distorted self-presentation, but reflects the tendency to manage one's self-image within social contexts and demands in order to adapt in a favorable way.

As previously stated, IM refers to the many ways individuals have of controlling their image to others. In any given situation, people integrate what they know about the social interaction with what they know about themselves with information specific to the current context to create socially acceptable self-images or behaviors (Nichols, 2011). This motivation for presentation is based upon the desire of avoiding being seen negatively (Domínguez & Van de Vijver, 2014; Lalwani et al., 2009). Some IM scales have measured the extent to which individuals purposely deceive others so they will be perceived more favorably. In Paulhus' words (1998, 2002), respondents to any scale systematically overreport their performance in a wide variety of desirable behaviors and underreport undesirable conducts.

The existing empirical research of IM has had important issues. Namely, it has mainly focused on only a few IM strategies, relied heavily on student samples, and lacked empirical assessments of previous IM frameworks (Bolino & Turnley, 2003; Kacmar et al., 2007); which is all probably due to the absence of a widely accepted measure of IM (Rao, Schmidt, & Murray, 1995). Another limitation are the measures employed to assess IM. Researchers have generally assessed it using either the Wayne and Ferris (1990), the Kumar and Beyerlein (1991), or Paulhus' BIDR (1984, 1998) scales. Bolino and Turnley (1999) argue that, in spite of their advantages, these scales have limitations in their use. About the Wayne and Ferris one (1990), they argue that it lacks sufficient reliability and validity properties of one of its subscales and many of its items, and ambiguity in the meaning of the dimensions it measures. Shortcomings of the Kumar and Beyerlein scale (1991) include its specific focus on ingratiation, and validity issues.

Jones and Pittman (1982) introduced a broad taxonomy composed of five theoretical groupings of IM strategies: Self-promotion, in which individuals point out their abilities or accomplishments with the purpose of being seen as competent; Ingratiation, or the employment of favors and flattery to attain likeability from observers; Exemplification, involves the use of self-sacrifice or going "above and beyond" in a task; Intimidation, where people signal their power or potential to punish and are perceived as dangerous by others; and Supplication, or the advertising of one's weakness in order to be seen as needy.

Bolino and Turnley (1999, 2003b) set to develop a measure that addressed the taxonomy proposed by Jones and Pittman (1982). The authors employed the first five steps of the procedure that Hinkin (1998)

suggested to develop a scale: 1) item generation, 2) questionnaire administration, 3) initial item reduction, 4) confirmatory factor analysis, and 5) convergent/discriminant validity. A 22-item measure resulted, with evidence of acceptable levels of reliability and validity. However, the authors suggested further testing of the instrument to corroborate that the guidelines established by Hinkin had been met.

To date, a valid instrument to assess IM is non-existent in Mexico. Therefore, the objective of the present study is to parallel Bolino and Turnley's validation efforts of an IM scale (1999) in a Mexican population. Taking into consideration the authors' theoretical framework and suggestions for future research, this study is divided into two phases, each one pursuing a different objective. The first one evaluates internal reliability and factor structure of the IM Scale; and the second one assesses a nomological network for IM by testing its relationship with other variables (the five-factor model of personality traits, social desirability, and sense of control).

Several empirical studies have found IM to be significantly and positively related with personality traits such as agreeableness and conscientiousness (Barrick & Mount, 1996; Kacmar et al., 2007; Li & Bagger, 2006; Meston, Heiman, Trapnell, & Paulhus, 1998; Robie, Komar, & Brown, 2010), friendliness, emotional stability, and control. Also, sense of control has been found to have a positive relationship with IM (Silvester, Anderson-Gough, Anderson, & Mohamed, 2002). However, there are still some psychological constructs, such as social desirability, that have only been suggested as theoretically relevant in the field of IM research (Nichols, 2011; Karam, Sekaja, & Geldenhuys, 2016), or haven't been widely evaluated

Therefore, our hypotheses were as follows: 1) The five factor structure reported by Bolino and Turnley (1999) will be replicated in a Mexican sample, and 2) IM will correlate positively and significantly with personality, SD, and sense of control.

Study 1

The purpose of this study was to translate and validate Bolino and Turnley's IM Scale, based on Jones and Pittman's taxonomy, on a Mexican sample.

Method

Participants

A total convenience sample of 741 Mexicans (435 women, 306 men) was used for this study, with ages ranging from 15 to 70 years (M=31.11 years, SD=13.21). 51% of the participants reported having high school education, 61% reported being single, and 44% reported being active students.

Instrument

Using the procedure proposed by Brislin (1970), the Bolino and Turnley IM Scale (1999) was translated from english into spanish, and back-translated into english by a third party in order to verify the initial translation's precision. The scale consists of 22 items that measure five IM strategies: 1) Self-promotion (e.g., Make people aware of your accomplishements), 2) Ingratiation (e.g., Use flattery and favors to make your colleagues like you more), 3) Exemplification (e.g., Arrive early at school in order to look dedicated), 4) Intimidation (e.g., Deal strongly or aggressively with coworkers who interfere in your business), and 5) Supplication (e.g., Pretend not to understand something to gain someone's help). Bolino and Turnley report Cronbach Alpha's reliability coefficients for each of the five dimensions are .73, .83, .75, .86, and .88, respectively. Moreover, the authors reported adequate fit indices for the scale, as assessed by the Goodness of Fit Index (GFI= .91), the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI= .92), and the Comparative Fit Index (CFI= .94). The scale was presented in a five-point Likert format from *I totally disagree* (1) to *I totally agree* (5).

Procedure

The instrument was applied in public spaces, both individually and in groups. All participation for this study was anonymous and voluntary, and no monetary compensation was offered for any participation.

Results

Reliability analysis were conducted for each of the five strategies, obtaining Cronbach's Alpha scores as follows: Ingratiation (Ingr) = .79, supplication (Sup)

= .84; self-promotion (Self) = .77; Exemplification (Exem) = .70; and Intimidation (Int)= .77.

Congruent to Jones and Pittman's proposal, we decided to force the item pool's factor analysis to a five factor solution (see Table 1). It can be observed that the factor loading of Sup12 item (Try to gain assistance or sympathy from people by appearing needy in some area) does not correspond with the rest of its dimension's items, despite having an adequate communality (.53). The Sup18 item (Act like you know less than you do so people will help you out) loads with nearly .40 in two factors. As for the Int11 item (Deal strongly or aggressively with coworkers who interfere in your business), it resulted with a communality of .27 and a marginal factor loading of .39. Finally, the Exem8 item (Try to appear busy, even at times when things are slower) fails to load distinctively in correspondence with its dimension's items, and has no factor loadings equal or greater than .40. All five factors of this second EFA's solution had at least three items in them with relevant factor loadings. This suggests that, even though some items can have ambiguous loadings, the scale can be considered multidimensional with five factors, partially supporting our first hypothesis.

In order to verify if the five-factor solution was psychometrically adequate, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed, proposing a recursive

Table 1
Factor loadings of an analysis by maximum verosimilitude in a forced five-factor solution

Items	1	2	3	4	5	Communalities
Ingr1	-.13	-.01	**.65**	-.08	.21	.41
Ingr 7	-.03	.08	**.82**	-.14	.02	.61
Ingr 15	.18	.04	**.62**	.11	-.12	.59
Ingr 20	.02	.03	**.53**	.31	-.10	.53
Sup2	-.06	.01	.15	-.16	**.79**	.54
Sup3	.05	.06	-.04	-.04	**.80**	.63
Sup6	.05	-.04	-.01	.31	**.51**	.60
Sup12	.18	-.07	.07	.36	.25	.53
Sup18	.07	-.07	-.08	**.40**	.39	.51
Self4	-.05	**.60**	.12	.01	.10	.45
Self10	-.06	**.60**	-.01	.01	-.05	.33
Self17	.10	**.73**	.03	.03	-.02	.64
Self22	.01	**.69**	-.01	.07	.01	.51
Exem5	-.06	.02	.31	**.41**	.02	.39
Exem8	.32	-.11	.32	.02	.06	.33
Exem13	-.02	.02	-.08	**.85**	-.04	.59
Exem19	-.09	.08	.01	**.72**	-.08	.41
Int9	**.70**	-.08	.12	-.11	.03	.47
Int11	.39	.31	-.14	-.09	.11	.27
Int14	**.70**	.01	.01	.04	-.04	.51
Int16	**.83**	.07	-.09	-.08	-.05	.55
Int21	**.60**	-.07	-.02	.11	.04	.46
Eigenvalues	*7.41*	*2.36*	*1.47*	*1.05*	*0.99*	
% explained variance	*31.46*	*8.5*	*4.3*	*2.47*	*2.43*	

Note: Bold-faced numbers have >.40 factor loadings. Ingr = ingratiation; Sup = supplication; Self = self-promotion; Exem = exemplification; and Int= intimidation.

model based on a maximum likelihood estimation (see Figure 1). Since the sample's size was large, the chi-squared statistic became very sensitive and suggested a poor fit $\chi^2(196, N = 741) = 680.800$, $p < .001$. However, by using the descriptive goodness-of-fit indexes of the original scale and a discrepancy index, the model turned out satisfactory (GFI=.92, TLI=.91, CFI=.92, RMSEA=.05) and fits the observed data. The correlations between the five strategies range from .24 to .81 and are all significant to the $p<.001$ level, being the highest correlation the one between Supplication and Exemplification (r=.86). It can be observed in this model that, unlike Table 1's results, no item is ambiguous because they all have factor loadings superior to .40 and are significant to the p. <.001 level. This provides additional evidence to our first hypothesis.

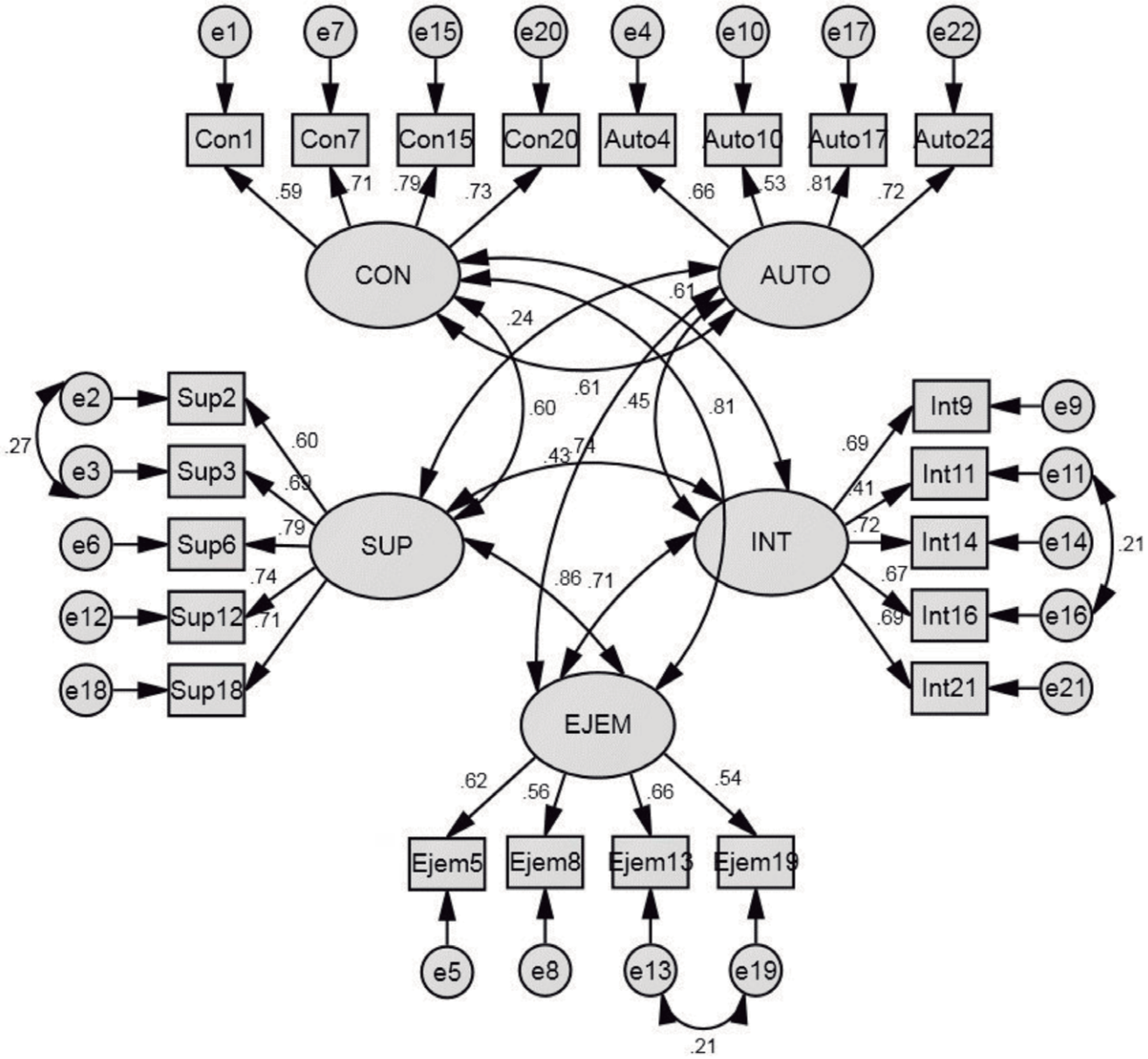

Figure 1. Standarized coefficients of the final model fit for the Bolino and Turnely IM Scale. Ingr = ingratiation; Sup = supplication; Self = self-promotion; Ejem = exemplification; and Int= intimidation. Latent constructs are shown in ellipses and observable variables in rectangles.

Study 2

The goal of this study was to establish a nomological network of IM, providing construct validity.

Method

Participants

A total convenience sample of 434 women and 237 men were used for this study, with ages from 15 to 70 years (M=30.5 years, SD=13.13).

Instruments

a) *The IM Scale* (Bolino & Turnley, 1999), validated in Study 1.

b) *NEO-FFi Personality Inventory* (McCrae & Costa Jr, 2004): Consisting of 60 items that measure five dimensions, with 12 items each: 1) Neuroticism, which measures the tendency to experience negative feelings such as fear, embarrassment, ire, etc. (e.g., I am not a persona who worries much); 2) Extraversion, assessing sociability, and preference for company and excitement (e.g., I really like having a lot of people around me); 3) Openness, measuring the interest for the external world and new experiences (e.g., I frequently try new foods or food from other countries); 4) Agreeableness, which assesses altruism and sympathy toward the others (e.g., I try to be friendly toward everyone I meet); and 5) Conscientiousness, which measures the capacity for self-control of desires and impulses in order to attain goals (e.g., I keep my belongings clean and in order).

c) *Indigenous Social Desirability Scale* (Domínguez Espinosa & Van de Vijver, 2014): Conformed by 14 items, the scale measures two dimensions of social desirability: a positive one with six items (e.g., I easily forgive those who offend me) and a negative one with eight items (e.g., I tell lies if I know I won't be caught). The scale's fit measures for its bi-factorial solution have been reported as adequate.

d) *Sense of Control Scale* (Ross & Mirowsky, 1989): An instrument with a total of eight items, four of which measure the level of perceived control (e.g., I am responsible of my own success), and the rest measure the lack of control (e.g., I have little control over the bad things that happen to me).

The internal consistency for all scales was assessed by Cronbach's Alpha, and values for each instrument are presented on Table 2.

Results

Table 2 shows that the average scores for the Supplication and Exemplification strategies are the lowest, whereas the highest scores correspond to conscientiousness, agreeableness, and negative social desirability. It must be noted that all of the scores averaged under the theoretical mean (3).

Table 2
Descriptive analysis of the IM and personality variables

	M	SD	α
1. Ingratiation	2.38	0.92	.79
2. Supplication	1.82	0.74	.84
3. Self-promotion	2.97	0.92	.77
4. Exemplification	1.95	0.70	.70
5. Intimidation	2.03	0.77	.78
6. Neuroticism	2.65	0.58	.71
7. Extraversion	3.43	0.51	.72
8. Openness	3.41	0.64	.67
9. Agreeableness	3.59	0.57	.68
10.Conscientiousness	3.69	0.62	.81
11. P-SD	3.12	0.72	.70
12. N-SD	3.56	0.63	.80
13. Sense of Control	2.17	0.79	.71

Note: All variables range from 1 to 5. Variables numbered 1 through 5 are IM Strategies; variables 6 through 10 correspond to the five-factor model of personality; variables 11 and 12 are Positive SD and Negative SD; and variable 13 is the one factor solution for Sense of Control.

The correlations between IM strategies and other variables can be seen on Table 3. Note that neuroticism correlated positively and significantly with all of the IM strategies; the highest being its correlation with supplication. Extraversion correlated negatively with supplication and positively with self-promotion, Openness had a negative and moderate correlation with supplication, Agreeableness correlated negatively with all of the strategies, particularly with

intimidation, and Conscientiousness did not correlate significantly with Self-promotion, although it correlated negatively with the rest of the strategies. As for social desirability, the positive dimension correlated negatively with intimidation, while the negative dimension did so with all of the strategies, especially with supplication and intimidation. Finally, the sense of control trait correlated positively with all the strategies, except for Self-promotion. Our second hypothesis is only partially supported.

In order to establish the correlation between the set of predictors with the set of five IM strategies, we ran a canonical correlation analysis, results that are presented on Table 4. Since there are five dependent variables, the same number of roots were obtained, out of which three have the most practical utility because their canonical correlation is greater than .30. The first root has the greatest significance and is therefore generally the only one to be interpreted. However, the other roots reflect interesting results. The first root suggests that intimidation and supplication are greater when there is less agreeableness and acceptance of errors. The second root indicates that, with more extraversion and less agreeableness, there is more intimidation and self-promotion. It can be seen in the third root that there is more self-promotion and ingratiation when there is more extraversion and positive social desirability. Then, the fourth root shows that with less conscientiousness there is less exemplification. Lastly, in the fifth root one can observe that with less narcissism and sense of control there is less ingratiation. The five roots, in total, explain 24% of the variance for IM.

Discussion

Our effort to parallel the validation of Bolino and Turnley's IM scale has been fruitful, translated into Spanish, supporting evidence of its validity in a Mexican sample. The factor analysis confirms the presence of a five-factor solution, as reported previously by the instrument's authors (Bolino & Turnley, 1999, 2003a, 2003b). Not only this confirms the original configuration of the five dimensions but also stretches its temporal stability across time. The psychometric evidence shows that our translation replicates Jones and Pittman's (1982) taxonomy, maintaining its stability in a different cultural context (Karam et al., 2016). These psychometric properties enhance the scale's usefulness and its attractiveness to students and scholars worldwide.

Although the scale was originally developed for its use in organizations (Bolino & Turnley, 2003a, 2003b; Harris et al., 2007), it has proven useful in evaluating IM in other contexts, such as ours. Not only this confirms that the construct's structure is stable across contexts but it also supports Jones and Pittman's (1982) theory and Kacmar et al.'s (2007) findings. Our results suggest how big can the scope be with IM, and how it can be used in everyday contexts. Also, almost any given psychological construct can manifest distinctively in different cultural contexts. Triandis, Bontempo, Leung & Hui (1990) state that

Table 3
Inter-scale correlations of the IM dimensions and the personality traits

	Ingratiation	Supplication	Self-promotion	Exemplification	Intimidation
Neuroticism	.32**	.45**	.11*	.30**	.37**
Extraversion	-.04	-.31**	.24**	-.14**	-.11**
Openness	-.05	-.24**	.10*	-.15**	-.09*
Agreeableness	-.19**	-.45**	-.11**	-.29**	-.60**
Conscientiousness	-.24**	-.51**	-.01	-.28**	-.36**
P-SD	.08	-.08	.06	.02	-.22**
N-SD	-.40**	-.61**	-.21**	-.44**	-.54**
Sense of control	.31**	.44**	.05	.32**	.29**

Note: P-SD = positive social desirability; N-SD= negative social desirability. **p<.001, *p<.01.

Table 4
Canonical correlation analysis of the IM strategies and the personality traits

	First root		Second root		Third root		Fourth root		Fifth root	
	Canonical Coefficients	r	Canonical Coefficients	r	Canonical Coefficients	r	Canonical Coefficients	r	Canonical Coefficients	r
Personality Traits										
Neuroticism	.20	.62	-.10	-.15	.32	.17	.40	.33	-.51	**-.40**
Extraversion	.02	-.36	.59	**.50**	.58	**.64**	.12	-.03	.16	.12
Openness	-.10	-.27	.24	.33	.22	.30	.55	.41	-.32	-.30
Agreeableness	-.36	**-.77**	-.73	**-.42**	.41	.32	.54	.13	.37	.13
Conscientousness	-.13	-.68	.26	.27	.16	.18	-.82	**-.45**	-.50	-.22
P-SD	-.03	-.23	-.40	-.37	.32	**.52**	-.48	-.35	-.08	-.03
N-SD	-.47	**-.87**	.02	.06	-.59	-.26	.21	.07	-.70	-.27
Sense of Control	.13	.57	-.22	-.36	.09	.12	-.22	-.08	-.70	**-.48**
IM strategies										
Ingratiation	-.02	.52	-.40	-.21	.59	**.69**	.64	.09	-.97	**-.45**
Supplication	.61	**.89**	-.63	-.36	-.13	.07	.49	.03	.92	.24
Self-promotion	-.11	.22	.40	**.42**	.74	**.83**	-.03	-.07	.81	.29
Exemplification	-.01	.60	-.20	-.22	.04	.34	-1.35	**-.67**	-.14	-.14
Intimidation	.55	**.85**	.95	**.49**	-.45	.05	.05	-.05	-.49	-.18
Canonical correlation	*.76*		*.47*		*.36*		*.12*		*.09*	
% of variance explained	*19.79*		*2.47*		*1.66*		*.12*		*.06*	

Note: P-SD = positive social desirability; N-SD= negative social desirability. The bold-faced coefficients are the highest ones in each root.

three different cultural levels (regional-geographical, socio-demographic, and individual) may shape the way different variables interact with each other. However, our findings suggest that some core characteristics exist within the original five-dimensional configuration that go beyond these cultural limitations and manifest in a relatively permanent fashion.

Just as Karam et al. (2016), Bolino and Turnley (1999), Clark (2011), and Kacmar et al. (2007) proposed, we included social desirability as one of the theoretically relevant variables linked to IM. Key constructs such as personality and social desirability moderate several processes such as need for power, self-monitoring, self-esteem, social performance and self-promotion, which shows the overall potential of the IM scale. Considering that IM has been considered as one of the many ways in which social desirability can arise, Uziel (2010) has proposed that when used not as a "validity tool", IM scales provide much substance. Uziel (2010) has proposed through an extensive review that, when used as an approach to measure traits, IM may be associated and used as indicator for approval, defensiveness, self-esteem, agreeableness, emotional stability, among other constructs.

Social behavior moderated by IM scores may have underlying desires to belong according to Baumeister & Leary (1995), Acosta and Domínguez (2012), Domínguez and Van de Vijver, (2014), and Lalwani et al. (2009), and considering that IM and its outcomes in other domains has been widely reviewed (Uziel, 2010), we may suggest, shedding some light in turn of our recent findings, that the implications of IM extend beyond social behavior and reflect a self-regulatory capacity.

Although the overall consistency of the scale was put to test and it rendered positive outcomes, a second look at the items could improve the coefficients in our results. Being able to identify poorly performing items could produce an even better scale and stronger

statistical results. Other theoretically relevant variables could be included in further research, as the treatment of IM may have versatile applications in clinical, social, and even organizational approaches in psychology.

Finally, the examination of IM's nomological network suggests evidence of validity. Although the correlations could be higher, we demonstrated convergent validity between several subscales. Results from these tests demonstrate the overlap between different variables and shed some useful information for future research. These findings are even more impressive given that most of the research is conducted in Anglo-American and European contexts, which tend to differ significantly from Collectivist-Hispanic-Latin-American contexts such as the Mexican one. Our results, as well as Nichols' (2011) are not conclusive, there's still a whole field left to explore. Theoretical frameworks between our variables are quite similar, which could lead to thinking that we may be measuring interaction of these variables when trying to create favorable impressions, considering both internal thoughts and overt, expressed behaviors.

IM works in such a way that in gives people strategies to cope and blend into society and their social network (Dominguez & Van de Vijver, 2014; Lalwani et al., 2009; Tetlock & Manstead, 1985). IM allows every person to be conscious about how he or she projects into the world, satisfying personal and social needs. According to Acosta and Dominguez (2014), a solid understanding of IM, and how it relates to other variables can shed some light into understanding how and why people adjust their images in several social contexts, which could then in turn promote their wellbeing.

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