

Research Article

Front Stage and Back Stage Sales Promotion Girls (SPG) in Car Dealer of PT Toyota Merdeka Motor (Toyota) Soreang Bandung Regency

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This study is an analysis of self-presentation, performance, and appearance of sales promotion girls (SPG) at Toyota Dealer in Soreang, Bandung Regency. The aim of this research is (1) to determine the front-stage presentation of SPG at PT Toyota Merdeka Motor in Soreang, Bandung Regency, and (2) to understand the backstage behavior of SPG at PT Toyota Merdeka Motor in Soreang, Bandung Regency. This research employs a qualitative descriptive method with a purposive sampling technique. Data collection techniques involve observation and document research. The primary informants for this study are the sales promotion girls of PT Toyota Merdeka Motor. The data analysis technique utilizes the interactive model by Milles and Huberman, involving data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data triangulation is also employed in the research analysis. The results of the study indicate that self-presentation is divided into front-stage and backstage behavior. The front-stage behavior includes the performance and appearance of sales promotion girls. There is a notable difference in the behavior of SPG at Toyota PT when they are on the front stage as opposed to when they are backstage.

Keywords: dramaturgy, self-presenting, front stage, and backstageCorresponding Author: Ratna Suminar; email: ratnasuminar605@student.uns.ac.id

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1. Introduction

The life and role of Sales Promotion Girls in the automotive sales industry, particularly concerning self-presentation and the use of attractive uniforms to boost sales, have a significant impact. In this context, Sales Promotion Girls are expected to appear alluring, enticing, and captivating to customers in order to enhance the appeal of the company's products [1].

However, this role also comes with a number of consequences and traumatic feelings for Sales Promotion Girls, as they may encounter unfair treatment or negative judgments

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from society. Although they are required to play different roles in front of and behind the stage [2], this can create significant psychological pressure for them [3].

Stringent regulations regarding uniforms and physical appearance can also generate negative stigma towards Sales Promotion Girls in society [4], [5]. While some of them adhere to company regulations properly, others may choose unconventional paths to meet sales targets. This can result in negative labeling and unfair treatment from the public.

For instance, in the Soreang Subdistrict, there are restrictions or refusals towards Sales Promotion Girls in some residential areas, even though their appearance is modest [6]. This reflects how society holds a negative perception of the role of Sales Promotion Girls, even if the uniforms or attire they wear are not always controversial [7].

2. Method

This research employs a qualitative descriptive method with purposive sampling technique. Data collection techniques involve observation and document research. The primary informants for this study are Sales Promotion Girls at PT Toyota Dealer. The data analysis technique utilizes the interactive model by Milles and Huberman [8], involving data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions [9], [10]. Data triangulation is also used in the research analysis [11].

3. Result and Discussion

3.1. Self-Presentation of Sales Promotion Girls (SPG) at PT. Toyota Merdeka Motor Dealer

"The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life" is a significant work in sociology written by Erving Goffman and published in 1959 [12]. This book elaborates on how individuals behave and present themselves in everyday social interactions. Goffman introduces the concept of social dramaturgy, likening social interaction to a theatrical performance. He argues that individuals tend to "play roles" in various social situations and manage the impressions they want to project to others.

The presentation of self in everyday life is highly crucial, as described in Erving Goffman's work "The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life." We can observe that individuals, such as SPGs, focus on efforts to construct and manage their self-image in front of others. They use symbols such as language, body language, facial expressions, and

chosen attire to shape others' perceptions of themselves. Both Goffman and Charles Cooley's concept of the "looking-glass self" underscore the importance of symbolic actions and self-presentation in shaping social identity and how these perceptions impact further social interactions [13].

As an SPG, how one presents oneself significantly influences the impression they convey to the audience or consumers. This involves aspects such as neat physical appearance, polite and friendly behavior, effective communication skills, physical and mental resilience, professionalism, creativity, and in-depth knowledge of the products they promote [14]. By understanding and developing these aspects, an SPG can build a professional, convincing, and appealing self-image to consumers, which, in turn, helps them succeed in their role as product or service representatives [15].

In their work, an SPG focuses on the effort to construct and manage their self-image in the presence of others. They use symbolic signs, such as the language they use, body movements, facial expressions, and chosen attire to shape others' perceptions of themselves [16]. When attending formal events, an SPG will dress neatly and speak politely to create a professional and trustworthy impression. On the other hand, in relaxed situations, they may alter their appearance and body language to appear more casual, creating a friendlier and more approachable impression.

A well-executed self-presentation that aligns with the desired image can help an SPG persuade and impress the audience or consumers. Furthermore, it plays a crucial role in achieving their job objectives, such as increasing sales of the promoted products or services. Several key aspects contribute to building a self-image as an SPG. Paying attention to and developing these aspects can help an SPG become more effective in their work and achieve success in promoting products or services. Here is a further explanation of each aspect: Physical appearance, Polite and friendly behavior, Effective communication skills, Physical and mental resilience, Professionalism, Creativity, and Product knowledge.

By focusing on and developing these aspects, an SPG can build a strong, professional, and attractive self-image to consumers. This will assist them in achieving sales targets, fostering good relationships with consumers, and enhancing the reputation of the company they represent.

3.2. Front Stage

3.2.1. The Performance Sales Promotion Girls at PT. Toyota Merdeka Motor

Being a Sales Promotion Girl (SPG) indeed requires good communication skills and the ability to build emotional closeness with potential customers. Performance is the forefront of an SPG, where they must showcase their best work as sales professionals. Creating a friendly and positive impression is crucial in establishing good relationships with customers. A friendly and positive attitude creates a pleasant atmosphere and makes customers feel comfortable interacting with SPGs, which opens up opportunities to get to know customers better, listen to their needs, and offer tailored solutions according to their requirements. When customers feel treated well and valued, they are more likely to open up and share information about their preferences, expectations, and needs. With a deeper understanding of customers' personalities and preferences, SPGs can adjust their approach to promote products more effectively. Furthermore, a friendly and positive impression also reflects positively on the brand and company represented by an SPG [17]. Customers are more inclined to engage with a brand that provides a pleasant and satisfying experience through interactions with SPGs.

Becoming an SPG requires good communication skills and the ability to build emotional relationships with potential customers. SPGs must perform at their best when acting as sales professionals. A friendly and positive attitude is crucial in establishing good relationships with customers. This helps customers feel comfortable and open to discussing their needs. Each SPG has a unique approach to promoting products. Some use a sympathetic style to evoke empathy from customers, while others seek common interests or hobbies to build a strong emotional connection. Paying close attention to customer needs and offering personalized solutions also creates a positive impression. Open and transparent communication builds trust, while product knowledge and professionalism differentiate SPGs from competitors. Focusing on quality and responsive customer service is also effective in creating a positive impression on customers.

3.2.2. Appearance of Sales Promotion Girls at PT. Toyota Merdeka Motor

Appearance is crucial in a professional job, including when interacting with superiors, colleagues, and customers. This encompasses physical appearance, attitude, work ethics, and body language. A combination of good appearance and strong marketing skills helps enhance the success of SPGs in selling products. Mental strengths, such as self-confidence and resilience to pressure, are also important in the role of an SPG.

Professional appearance garners positive attention from customers, which can boost sales.

Company rules, such as uniforms, accessories, and adherence to appearance standards, create a professional image and efficiency in the workplace. Some SPGs may have different preferences and values regarding these rules. Additional accessories such as smartphones, watches, and vehicles also influence the image of SPGs while working. Overall, strict operational standards and adherence to rules emphasize the importance of a neat and professional appearance in the role of an SPG. All of these factors help improve the company's image, attract customers, and create an organized and efficient work environment.

However, it is evident that workplace appearance rules are not always liked by everyone, and differences in opinions may arise among SPGs or other employees. Everyone has different personal preferences and values related to clothing and appearance. Some SPGs may feel uncomfortable or disagree with specific rules, such as wearing miniskirts or tight-fitting clothes, because they do not align with their personal preferences or their religious or cultural values. This can affect their comfort and confidence while working. On the other hand, some SPGs may feel comfortable with these rules and support them because they align with their preferred clothing style or because they believe that adhering to these rules helps them perform their job duties and achieve success in sales.

Additional accessories such as smartphones, watches, and vehicles used by an SPG also play a significant role in building their self-image while working. These accessories not only serve as tools or devices to perform tasks but also reflect personal style and create a positive impression on customers.

Here are some key points related to additional accessories that can influence an SPG's self-image:

1. **Smartphone:** A smartphone with a good camera quality or specific features can help SPGs capture moments and manage data more efficiently. The choice of a smartphone can also reflect professionalism and personal preferences.
2. **Watch:** A watch is not just a time-telling tool but can also be a stylish accessory that reflects an SPG's personality. The choice of a watch can indicate the taste and desired impression of the SPG, whether it's a classic, modern, or sporty look.
3. **Vehicle:** The type and brand of the vehicle used by an SPG can also influence their self-image. A vehicle that suits the job requirements, such as the ability to access

various terrains or cover longer distances, can enhance efficiency and comfort while working.

In summary, additional accessories can be a crucial part of building an SPG's self-image while working.

3.2.3. Backstage as the Reality of Sales Promotion Girls at PT. Toyota Merdeka Motor

In this context, SPGs strive to appear professional, attractive, and convincing in front of customers to boost sales and create a positive experience for clients. Behind the scenes, they may endeavor to maintain a professional image and adhere to company rules, including established appearance standards.

The dramaturgy in the lives of SPGs may involve various elements, such as speaking style, body language, facial expressions, and physical appearance. All of these can be adjusted to create the desired impression in their work situations.

This research provides valuable insights into how the social behavior of SPGs can be influenced by job requirements and the work environment. However, it's also crucial to consider the mental and emotional well-being of SPGs and provide support to create a balanced and healthy work environment for them as individuals.

This research reveals differences in the behavior of Sales Promotion Girls (SPGs) on and off the stage in the automotive sales industry. SPGs portray characters that may contradict their true personalities to create desired impressions in front of customers. This may involve physical appearance, body language, and facial expressions.

However, this dramaturgical role may not always reflect their true selves, and some SPGs may feel pressured or inauthentic. There are also emotional impacts, such as trauma or unfair treatment experienced during work.

It is essential to understand how the work environment affects SPGs' behavior and to provide mental and emotional support to help them maintain balance and well-being in their roles.

Their role as SPGs in this performance drama may be in contrast to their true personalities or personal circumstances. This can be done for various reasons, such as creating a specific impression on customers, gaining appreciation or recognition for their work, or adapting to a specific work environment.

4. Conclusion

Self-Presentation of Sales Promotion Girls (SPG): The way SPGs present themselves is of utmost importance in their professional realm. It requires their ability to project a positive image that aligns with their desired impression on consumers, ultimately aiding in achieving professional goals such as boosting product or service sales. Key elements of self-presentation include physical appearance, a polite demeanor, effective communication skills, resilience in both physical and mental aspects, professionalism, creativity, and a deep understanding of the products they promote.

Performance of Sales Promotion Girls (SPG): SPGs are expected to consistently deliver their best performance to earn recognition from their respective organizations. Effective performance involves creating a friendly and positive impression on consumers, employing persuasive techniques, identifying common interests and hobbies, serving as a supportive guide to consumers, and maintaining a strong commitment to customer service.

Appearance of Sales Promotion Girls (SPG): Maintaining a well-groomed and professional appearance is highly significant in the business world, particularly during interactions with clients, colleagues, and superiors. Appearance encompasses clothing, demeanor, ethical work practices, and body language. Research highlights that aligning one's appearance with organizational standards can significantly influence an SPG's approach to work and shape consumer responses.

Backstage Behavior of Sales Promotion Girls (SPG): SPGs often take on different roles both in public and private settings. Onstage, they exude confidence, friendliness, and charm to effectively engage consumers. However, behind the scenes, they adopt a more relaxed demeanor and use everyday language. They also have personal aspirations and face challenges in balancing their private lives with their professional responsibilities.

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