Measuring the Relationship between Managerial Resourcefulness and Job Performance

Faruk Sahin\textsuperscript{a*}, Onur Koksal\textsuperscript{a}, Harun Ucak\textsuperscript{b}

\textsuperscript{a} Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Niğde University, Niğde 51240, Turkey
\textsuperscript{b} Fethiye Business School, Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University, Muğla 48300, Turkey

Abstract

Managerial resourcefulness includes generic competencies that enable adaptive responses to the demands of complex and volatile aspects of the work environment. However, there is no evidence that managerial resourcefulness increase job performance. In this study, we examined the relationship between managerial resourcefulness and job performance in a sample of 119 first-line and middle managers. Data was collected through structured surveys administered to the managers and their superiors. The results indicated that managerial resourcefulness is positively associated with the superior ratings of job performance. The findings also showed that managerial resourcefulness explains additional variance in job performance over and above that of demographic variables and the Big Five traits of personality. These findings suggest the importance of managerial resourcefulness as a critical predictor of job performance. Implications for future research and practice are discussed.

Keywords: Managerial resourcefulness; manager; job performance.

1. Introduction

In cognitive behavior therapy research, resourcefulness refers to the ability to cope with difficult, stressful and challenging situations and engage in cognitive self-regulating or self-controlling adaptive responses (Meichenbaum, 1977; Rosenbaum, 1983). Highly resourceful individuals self-regulate and direct their behavior to tolerate aversive environments and sustain coping behaviors (Rosenbaum, 1990). Kanungo and Misra (1992) drew upon the

* Faruk Sahin Tel.: +90 388 225 2331
E-mail address: faruksahin@nigde.edu.tr
notion of resourcefulness to conceptualize managerial resourcefulness which refers to a set of generic competencies that enable managers to cope successfully with challenges in a work setting. According to Kanungo and Misra (1992), competencies are inner resources of managers which help them to employ self-regulating and self-controlling procedures on their jobs. A resourceful manager is therefore an individual who demonstrates competence in self-regulating his or her emotions, feelings, thoughts, and actions to cope well with the demands of managerial role (Kanungo & Misra, 2004, 2005; Kanungo & Misra, 1992). In short, managerial resourcefulness can be defined as a set of generic competencies that enable adaptive responses to the demands of the managerial role (Kanungo & Misra, 1992). Three generic competencies are categorized under the rubric of managerial resourcefulness: Affective, intellectual, and action-oriented competencies.

Affective competence refers to the management of emotional arousal (Misra & Kumar, 2000). It includes the abilities to control feelings of withdrawal and depression, to develop a sense of equanimity and problem-solving orientation, to delay immediate gratification, to demonstrate proactive involvement, enthusiasm, and interest in meeting challenges (Kanungo & Misra, 1992). Managers with high affective competence use cognition and self-instruction to regulate his or her emotional reactions so that they may facilitate rather than interfere with the execution of the managerial jobs (Kanungo & Menon, 2004, 2005; Kanungo & Misra, 1992). The second component of managerial resourcefulness is intellectual competence which refers to the effective management of thought processes, beliefs and expectations (Misra & Kumar, 2000). It requires the abilities to deal with information gathering, to think analytically and synthetically, to reason in an analogical way, to understand linkages or dependencies among components, to plan and evaluate alternative courses of actions. Furthermore, intellectual competence includes self-reflection ability which strengthens one’s feeling of self-efficacy (Kanungo & Misra, 1992). Managers with high intellectual competence apply problem-solving strategies and have the capacity for self-reflection on how to enhance self-efficacy (Kanungo & Menon, 2004; Kanungo & Misra, 1992). Finally, action-oriented competence refers to the management of intentions and action orientations (Misra & Kumar, 2000). It includes two types of action orientations, task-related and people-related action orientations (Kanungo & Misra, 1992). In a work setting, task-related action orientations refer to capabilities that can be characterized by attention to details, persistence of pursuit, and concern for a time frame. People-related action orientations involves capabilities to establish warm, empathic, nondirective, supportive, and trusting relationships with other organizational members and to use referent and expert power (Kanungo & Menon, 2004, 2005; Kanungo & Misra, 1992). Managers with high action-oriented competence have task- and people-related abilities for successful managerial performance.

To date, there has been limited research evaluating managerial resourcefulness and its application in work settings. For example, Kanungo and Menon (2004, 2005) found that managerial resourcefulness is negatively related to helplessness while being positively related to perceived empowerment, self-efficacy, and perceived control. With regard to performance, managerial resourcefulness explained additional variance in managerial success over and above that of age and education, whereas managerial success was assessed as salary levels of managers. In a recent study, managerial resourcefulness is found to be positively related to self-efficacy and psychological empowerment while being negatively related to perceived stress (Doğan & Şahin, 2011). Although previous findings indicated the practical importance of studying managerial resourcefulness, both for organizations and for managers; the predictive power of managerial resourcefulness on job performance is unclear.

The aim of the present study was to examine the relationship between managerial resourcefulness and job performance. Establishing the relationship between managerial resourcefulness and job performance is essential to confirming the conceptualization of managerial resourcefulness as a critical factor for managerial success. Although the relationship between managerial resourcefulness and job performance is unexplored to date, research which has accumulated important findings on the effects of managerial competencies on managerial performance can also support the link between managerial resourcefulness and managerial performance. Previous research has identified an array of competencies linked to managerial success (e.g. Boyatzis, 1982; Campbell, Dunnette, Lawler, & Weick, 1970; Goleman, 1998; Klamp & McClelland, 1986; Kotter, 1982). For example, recent studies have showed the validity and utility of intellectual competencies such as analytic and conceptual thinking in predicting managerial success (e.g. Boyatzis, 2006; Ryan, Emmerling, & Spencer, 2009). The abilities in affective competency such as abilities to control one’s emotions and to delay immediate gratification appear similar to some of the abilities defined in mixed model of emotional intelligence which are important for success in different organizational contexts (Van Rooy & Viswesvaran, 2004). With regard to task and people related action orientations, studies have shown the importance of these orientations in managerial effectiveness (Burke et al., 2006).

competency conceptualized in managerial resourcefulness construct has its roots in research supporting its prediction of managerial performance (Doğan & Şahin, 2011). Thus, we hypothesize that managerial resourcefulness will predict job performance.

Further, this study examines whether the managerial resourcefulness offers additional explanatory power in the prediction of job performance over personality traits. The Big Five traits of personality have found to be predictors of job performance (Barrick, Mitchell, & Stewart, 2003). A recent study revealed that the Big Five traits exhibit correlations ranging from -0.03 to 0.31 with overall job performance (Kanfer & Kantrowitz, 2002). Unlike personality traits, resourcefulness is a dynamic construct which refers to the repertoire of acquired competencies that is learned over a lifetime and serves as a basis for coping with challenging situations (Meichenbaum, 1977; Rosenbaum, 1983). As such, managerial resourcefulness is not a basic and intrinsic quality; it is subject to change as a manager accumulated experience over time (Kanungo & Misra, 1992). Therefore, the capacity of managerial resourcefulness to add incremental validity to personality in the prediction of job performance is expected.

2. Method

2.1. Participants

The data come from a consumer products company in Turkey. We conducted a paper-based survey of 167 first-line and middle managers to evaluate managerial resourcefulness. A total of 119 questionnaires were usable, resulting in a response rate of 71%. Of the 119 managers, 24.4% were female and 75.6% were male. The mean age of the participants was 33.00 years (SD = 5.06). In terms of education level, most of them (73.1%) have a college degree and above (e.g. master’s degree), while 36.9% have high school degree or below. Managers reported an average length of tenure within their organization of 8.79 years (SD = 5.96).

2.2. Procedures

We secured permission from the top management and then potential participant lists were provided by the HR department of the company. We sent the questionnaires containing a cover letter in bulk to the HR department, accompanied by instructions to distribute the questionnaires to individual managers. The questionnaires included managerial resourcefulness, personality measures and demographic variables. A cover letter explained an overview of the study outlining the importance of the request, instructions on how to complete the study, a statement about confidentiality, and a closing with contact information. Participation in the study was voluntary. Participants returned the questionnaire in the stamped, self-addressed envelope. Each questionnaire was marked to enable matching to job performance scores.

We also administered a survey to the direct superiors of the participants, which asked them to evaluate job performance of the participants. In a similar way, the HR department of the company provided job performance scores of the participants using a set of performance questions developed for this research. Performance questions were based on criteria used by the company for individual evaluation. We ensured the HR department of the company that performance scores were obtained solely for research purposes. In total, 32 superiors responded provided performance ratings for the participants (M = 3.71, SD = 1.3).

2.3. Measures

2.3.1. Managerial resourcefulness:

We measured managerial resourcefulness with the managerial resourcefulness questionnaire developed by Doğan and Şahin (2011). The scale used in this study included 16 items for affective competence (e.g., “I generally keep my nerves under control”), 17 items for intellectual competence (e.g., “When I encounter a problem, I evaluate in detail the elements that caused the problem”), and 17 items for behavioral competence (e.g., “I set priorities, make lists of things to do, and use several reminders to use the time efficiently”). Participants rated items on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Higher scores on factors indicated a greater propensity to employ a managerial competence. The reliabilities of these scales were .92 for affective
competence, .89 for intellectual competence, and .93 for behavioral competence.

2.3.2. Personality:

Participants’ ratings were obtained with the 44-item BFI which has shown good psychometric properties, as well as considerable convergent and discriminant validity with longer Big Five measures. It includes short items that were selected from Big Five prototype definitions (Benet-Martinez & John, 1998). Participants were asked to indicate how much they agree with items on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The scale included eight items for extraversion (e.g., “I see myself as someone who is talkative”), nine items for agreeableness (e.g., “I see myself as someone who is considerate to almost everyone”), nine items for conscientiousness (e.g., “I see myself as someone who does things efficiently”), eight items for neuroticism (e.g., “I see myself as someone who worries a lot”), and ten items for openness (e.g., “I see myself as someone who values artistic, aesthetic experiences”). The reliabilities of these scales were .76 for extraversion, .79 for agreeableness, .84 for conscientiousness, .79 for neuroticism, and .82 for openness.

2.3.3. Job performance

We developed a set of performance questions for the present study. Seven items reflecting first-line and middle managers’ level of technical skills, problem solving, sense of ownership and responsibility, productivity, meeting deadlines, work relationship with others, and personal drive were agreed upon through discussion with the HR department. The appropriate superiors rated on each item to question using a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (never demonstrates this aspect of performance) to 5 (always demonstrates this aspect of performance). Sample items included “…find effective solutions to problems” and “…create effective work relationships with others.” We averaged the seven items to yield a single performance score for each individual. The reliability of the scale was .88.

2.3.4. Control Variables

We controlled for age, gender, education level, and tenure in organization to minimize the spurious effects of these demographic variables.

Since data came from two sources, we calculated the intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC[1]) to assess the degree of nonindependence in job performance ratings. The ICC(1) value is small (.03) and indicates that 3% of the variance in job performance is accounted for by rater (i.e. superiors) effects (Bliese, 2000). Therefore, it suggests that the data are independent.

Table 1. Means, standard deviations, and scale reliabilities and intercorrelations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scales</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Age</td>
<td>33.00</td>
<td>5.06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Gender</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Tenure</td>
<td>8.79</td>
<td>5.96</td>
<td>.46**</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Education</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>.23**</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>.39**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Agreeableness</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.26**</td>
<td>.18*</td>
<td>(.79)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Neuroticism</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.21*</td>
<td>-.27**</td>
<td>-.58**</td>
<td>(.79)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Conscientiousness</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.34**</td>
<td>-.37**</td>
<td>(.84)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Extraversion</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>-.19*</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-.26**</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>(.76)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Openness</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.22*</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.53**</td>
<td>-.50**</td>
<td>.40**</td>
<td>.41**</td>
<td>(.82)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Affective</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.22*</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>(.92)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competence</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.18*</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.32**</td>
<td>(.89)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Intellectual</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.19*</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>(.93)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Analysis and Results

The descriptive statistics and correlations of variables are presented in Table 1. The correlations between the components of managerial resourcefulness and job performance were significant and moderate in magnitude. Affective competence ($r = .52$, $p < .01$), intellectual competence ($r = .45$, $p < .01$), and behavioral competence ($r = .49$, $p < .01$) were significantly related to job performance. Of the Big Five traits of personality, extraversion ($r = .22$, $p < .05$) were significantly related to affective competence. Results indicated nonsignificant and relatively low correlations among the components of managerial resourcefulness and the Big Five traits of personality.

We performed a hierarchical regression analysis to test our prediction. In the first step, age, sex, educational level, and tenure were entered to assess their potentially effects. This is followed by the Big Five traits of personality entered on step 2 and, finally, the components of managerial resourcefulness were entered on the second step. As can be seen in Table 2, the control variables entered in the first step did not explain a significant amount of variance in job performance, $F(4, 114) = 0.243$, $p > .05$. With the addition of the Big Five traits of personality in the second step, there was a significant change in $R^2$, with 16% of the variance being explained, $F(9, 109) = 2.422$, $p < .05$. Of the Big Five traits of personality, conscientiousness ($\beta = .29$; $p < .01$) and extraversion ($\beta = .28$; $p < .01$) were significant predictors of job performance. Furthermore, conscientiousness retained its predictive power in the third step.

Results in step 3 demonstrated the incremental validity of the components of managerial resourcefulness, over and above demographic characteristics and the Big Five traits of personality in predicting job performance ($\Delta F = 27.487$, $p < 0.001$). Affective competence ($\beta = .29$; $p < .001$), intellectual competence ($\beta = .25$; $p < .01$), and behavioral competence ($\beta = .30$; $p < .001$) were significant predictors of job performance.

Table 2. Hierarchical regression analyses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-.079</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>-.055</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>.041</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreeableness</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscientiousness</td>
<td>.29**</td>
<td>.23**</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.30***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.29***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective Competence</td>
<td>.29**</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>.30***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual Competence</td>
<td>.157</td>
<td>.365</td>
<td>.478</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Competence</td>
<td>.026</td>
<td>.098</td>
<td>.478</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

4. Discussion

The present study addressed a significant gap in empirical research by examining the relation between managerial resourcefulness and job performance. We hypothesized that managerial resourcefulness will predict job
performance. Intercorrelations were in line with the hypothesis; the components of managerial resourcefulness were related to job performance. Moreover, the results showed that the addition of managerial resourcefulness components was able to explain additional variance in job performance over and above that of demographic variables and the Big Five traits of personality.

The primary contribution of the present research is the empirical examination of the predictive power of managerial resourcefulness on job performance. Kanungo and Misra (1992) argued that managers should have high level of managerial resourcefulness to cope with volatile aspects of the work environment. Furthermore, prior research suggested that resourceful manager has generic competencies that possibly lead him or her to managerial success (Doğan & Şahin, 2011; Kanungo & Menon, 2004, 2005). This study provides empirical evidence that managerial resourcefulness is associated with job performance. Specifically, resourceful managers were found to be more effective in meeting performance expectations at work.

Our study offers important implications for managerial effectiveness research. First, the results of this study suggest that managerial resourcefulness describes the successful manager. Specifically, evidence that managerial resourcefulness was able to explain additional variance in job performance over and above that of demographic variables and the Big Five traits of personality, suggest the benefits of including managerial resourcefulness when studying today’s complex and volatile aspects of the work environment. Thus, future research may find that inclusion of managerial resourcefulness improves predictions of managerial effectiveness. Second, our study has important implications for managerial training. Individuals have differing learning histories (Kanungo & Misra, 1992) and this suggest that managers are likely to differ in their ability and willingness to self-regulate emotions, thoughts and behavioral tendencies that may help or hinder effective managerial performance (Kanungo & Menon, 2004). Therefore, measurement of managerial resourcefulness can provide useful information on what kinds of interventions are necessary in managerial training programmes. Third, our study suggests importance of managerial resourcefulness in the performance appraisal system. Since our results highlighted affective, intellectual, and behavioral competencies as fundamental predictors of job performance, the performance appraisal system could include these competencies. Since the competencies conceptualized in managerial resourcefulness are generic competencies and transferrable across jobs (Kanungo & Misra, 1992), it would be important to consider the inclusion of the competencies in the performance appraisal processes for organizations that aim higher performance.

Although the present study is one of the first studies to report the predictive power of managerial resourcefulness on job performance, it is not without its limitations. First, we used job performance as a predictable outcome, because the main concern of the present study was to examine the relation between managerial resourcefulness and job performance. Future research could choose to test the other possible predictable outcome, both at individual level (e.g., perceived stress, burnout) and at organizational level (e.g., team/unit performance). Second, although we used multisource data, we relied upon single-source manager self-reports of perceived managerial resourcefulness and the Big Five traits of personality. This may raises the concerns in terms of common method variance and socially desirable responses (Edwards, 1990; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). Future research may think of gathering peers or subordinates ratings about managerial resourcefulness and personality traits. Third, the population sampled is another limitation of our research. We conducted our study in a consumer products company in Turkey and this may raise questions about the generalizability of the findings. Therefore, the results found here should not be generalized until the findings have been replicated in other job types as well as across nationalities.

In conclusion, our findings suggest the importance of managerial resourcefulness in prediction of job performance. Furthermore, managerial resourcefulness components explain additional variance in job performance over and above that of demographic variables and the Big Five traits of personality. Our study therefore contributes to clarifying the predictive power of managerial resourcefulness on job performance.

References


