



EFFECTS OF LEARNED RESOURCEFULNESS ON PERFORMANCE: THE ROLE OF IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT TACTICS

Hatice Necla Keles

Bahcesehir University. necla.keles@bahcesehir.edu.tr

Keywords

Learned resourcefulness, performance, impression management

JEL Classification

M10, M12

ABSTRACT

The main goal of this study is to investigate the effects of learned resourcefulness on performance and to determine the mediator role of impression management tactics, defined as “the process in which people attempt to influence the perceptions of others”. The sample used in this study consisted of people between the ages of 20 and 50, who were employed at a private bank in Istanbul (n=110). The measurements were conducted using the “Learned Resourcefulness Scale”, “Performance Scale” and “Impression Management Scale”, all adapted to Turkish samples.

1. INTRODUCTION

Learned resourcefulness, impression management, and performance are important factors that affect a person’s work behavior. Defined as a repertoire of behaviors and skills by which a person self-regulates internal events, learned resourcefulness is meaningful on an organizational and administrative level as it suggests that negative emotions and thoughts can be changed and corrected automatically to minimize negative consequences (Akgün, 2004, 441-448).

The importance of employee performance on an organization’s ability to accomplish its goals renders factors that affect performance critical. Although there are many variables that affect performance, the relationship between learned resourcefulness, which helps one to cope with unwanted situations, and performance provides businesses and employees with useful information.

Assuming that people with different learned resourcefulness levels will differ in terms of which impression management tactics they use while shaping their relationships with other individuals in organizational settings, this study aims to investigate the effects of learned resourcefulness on performance and to determine if impression management tactics have any mediating and/or shaping roles on the said effects.

The next section after literature review, study on the model and the method will be explained. The final part of the study empirical findings will be shared.

2. LITERATURE SURVEY

Learned Resourcefulness - The concept of success, which is generally defined as the level reached by the execution of target behavior, can differ between individuals, and factors that determine or affect the level of success may vary according to the areas in which individuals perform. Among those factors, an individual's experiences and acquired skills stand out. Learned resourcefulness is a concept referring to the effectiveness of an individual's coping skills when faced with stressful events in his/her personal or professional life. Coined by Meichenbaum (1977), the term learned resourcefulness is used to describe one of the personal factors that help explain human behavior. Defined as the possession of certain attitudes that help an individual to cope with stressful events and problems (Çakır, 2009), learned resourcefulness describes how well an individual can insulate himself/herself from situations that cause stress (Dağ, 1991), a value particularly relevant to contemporary organizations as it highlights an important personal quality. According to Rosenbaum (1980), skills that fit the description of learned resourcefulness are learned in an informal fashion at an early age and since individuals vary in their learning histories, their levels of learned resourcefulness also vary. Individuals with high levels of learned resourcefulness use problem-solving methods, steer towards positive thinking, are able to delay gratification if needed (Kennett, 1994) and can deploy problem solving skills when faced with an ongoing challenge instead of giving up (Rosenbaum, 1985 as cited in Smith, Davids, 1992). Whereas those with lower levels of learned resourcefulness tend to be prone to surrendering when faced with challenges and attribute failures to their own incompetence (Kennett, Keefer, 2006).

Performance - Defined as the "level of execution of a task according to pre-determined conditions or the task-performer's course of conduct", the concept of "performance" (Bingöl, 2003) is one of the major areas of investigation for contemporary organizations due to the fast-pace of change that characterizes the environmental and competitive conditions in which they operate. In the literature review, numerous studies were found that investigate the factors contributing to effective performance in organizations, the variables that cause individual differences in performance, as well as the relationship between performance variables. It was observed that there has been extensive research on topics such as self-regulation, life-satisfaction (Kale, 2013), emotional intelligence, professional satisfaction, organizational citizenship (Gürbüz, Yüksel, 2008), and leadership (Öcal, Karakılıç, 2013; Özdevecioğlu, Kanıgür, 2009); however, only a limited number of studies were conducted on the impact that learned resourcefulness, which is considered to be a personal factor in explaining human behavior, had on performance.

Impression Management Tactics - Often times, individuals can consciously attempt to create an impression on others. However, as individuals are not able to always act in a goal-directed and conscious manner, they can display automatic and habitual impression management behavior (Basım, Tatar, 2006). As in all social environments, people shape

their relationship with others through their behaviors in organizational environments. Impression management constitutes one of the most basic steps in both entering a new organization and during the process of an individual’s presence in the organization (Demir, 2002). In impression management, it is observed that the tactics used by individuals are not limited to a certain period of time or a context (Gardner, 1992), that same impression tactics are not used all the time and that different tactics could be used in different contexts (Schutz, 1998). The variation in these impression tactics could be due to differences in personal traits (Sadler et al., 2010), as well as to organizational factors (Drory, Zaidman, 2007).

3. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

Sampling - One hundred forty-two individuals employed at the Head Office of a private banking institution in Istanbul were recruited for this study. The participants filled out the surveys under the researchers’ supervision. During the evaluation process, 32 of the surveys were excluded from the study due to errors related to filling out the survey, and the remaining 110 were used for investigation.

Measurement Tools - On the survey form, scales with adjusted reliability values were used. Cronbach’s alpha values for each dimension were calculated, and the values were evaluated using the criteria outlined below (Kalaycı, 2006, 74).

Cronbach’s Alpha= 1,000-0,800 Excellent Internal Consistency

Cronbach’s Alpha= 0,800-0,600 Good Internal Consistency

Cronbach’s Alpha= 0,600-0,400 Acceptable Internal Consistency

Cronbach’s Alpha= 0,400-0,000 Poor/Unacceptable Internal Consistency

To collect data on the learned resourcefulness variable, The “Learned Resourcefulness Scale” (Dağ, 1991) developed by Rosenbaum (1980) and adapted to Turkish by Siva and Dağ (1991) was used. The scale consisted of 36 statements in a Likert-scale format. Each individual was able to get anywhere between 36 to 180 points, where higher points suggested a higher capacity of self-restraint or otherwise stated, a higher rate of the use of the coping strategies represented in the scale (Dağ, 1991).

Table 1: The Reliability/Internal Consistency of Learned Resourcefulness Scale

	Number of Items	Cronbach’s Alpha	Reliability
Implementation of Planned Behavior	4	0,979	Excellent Internal Consistency
Mood-Management	4	0,862	Excellent Internal Consistency
Management of Unwanted Thoughts	5	0,855	Excellent Internal Consistency

Management of Impulses and Implementation of Planned Behavior	6	0,904	Excellent Internal Consistency
Self-Sufficiency and Self-support	4	0,861	Excellent Internal Consistency
Pain Management	2	0,868	Excellent Internal Consistency
Delay of Gratification	4	0,875	Excellent Internal Consistency
Seeking Help	3	0,782	Excellent Internal Consistency
Favorable Interpretation of Events	3	0,952	Good Internal Consistency
Careful Supervising	3	0,804	Excellent Internal Consistency
Flexible Planning	2	0,974	Excellent Internal Consistency
Seeking a Supervisor	4	0,955	Excellent Internal Consistency

In the study, the contextual performance scale developed by Smith, Organ and Near (1983) and the task performance scale developed by Goodman and Svyantek (1999) were employed (Doğan, 2005). In the scale that consists of 22 statements, 15 of them constitute statements on contextual performance and the remaining 7 constitute statements on task performance. The reliability coefficients are .973 and .980 respectively for the contextual and task performance scales, which demonstrates that they have excellent internal consistency (Foster, 2002).

Table 2: Performance Scale Reliability/Internal Consistency Analysis Results

	Number of Statements	Cronbach's Alpha	Internal Consistency
Contextual Performance	15	0,973	Excellent Internal Consistency
Task Performance	7	0,980	Excellent Internal Consistency

As for impression management tactics, the "Impression Management Tactics" developed by Bolino and Turnley (1999) based on the taxonomy of these tactics suggested by Jones and Pittman (1982), were used. The adaptation of this scale into Turkish was made by Cantekin (2003).

Table 3: Reliability/Internal Consistency of the Impression Management Scale

	Number of Statements	Cronbach's Alpha	Internal Consistency
Seeking Pity	8	0,791	Excellent Internal Consistency
Seeking Sympathy by Displaying Personal Qualities	5	0,754	Excellent Internal Consistency
Trying to Act as a Model Employee	4	0,616	Excellent Internal Consistency
Seeking Respect through Forced Means	3	0,719	Excellent Internal Consistency
Owning up to One's Work	2	0,740	Excellent Internal Consistency

Research Model and Hypotheses

The hypotheses of this study investigating the effects of learned resourcefulness on performance and the mediating role of impression management tactics are as follows:

H1: There is a relationship between acquired resourcefulness of employees and their performances.

H2: There is a relationship between acquired resourcefulness of employees and their impression management tactics.

H3: There is a relationship between the impression management tactics of employees and their performances.

H4: The impression management tactics of employees play a mediatory role in the relationship between their learned resourcefulness and performance.

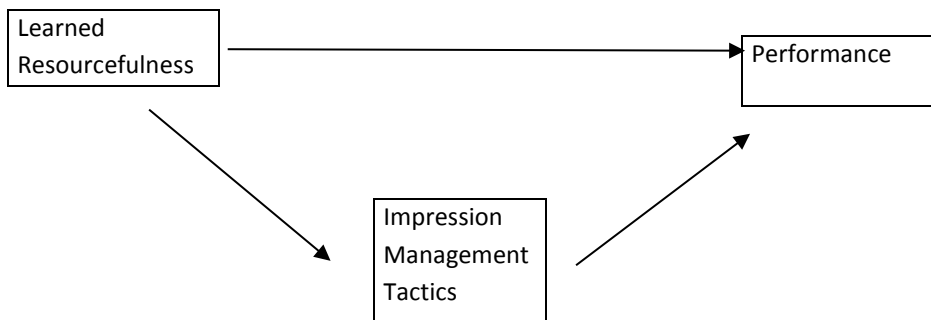


Figure 1: Research Model

4. EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

The findings of the study were analyzed using the SPSS 22 Program. The frequency and the percentage of the demographic variables are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Frequencies and Percentages of Demographic Variables

Variables	f	%	Variables	f	%
Sex			Education Level		
Female	76	69,1	Associate Degree	23	20,9
Male	34	30,9	Bachelor’s Degree	80	72,7
			Graduate Degree	7	6,4
Age			Years of Service		
20-30	31	28,2	0-5 years	45	40,9
30-40	59	53,6	5-10 years	43	39,1
40-50	20	18,2	10-15 years	22	20,0
Marital Status					
Married	43	39,1			
Single	67	60,9			

Following the analyses conducted on the relationship between the learned resourcefulness scale and the performance scale, a positive significant relationship was found at a low level (21.5 %) between implementing planned behavior on the learned resourcefulness scale and contextual performance on the performance scale. There were no other significant relationships between the dimensions of the learned resourcefulness scale and the performance scale. This finding did not support hypothesis H1of the study.

Table 5: Relationship between the Dimensions of the Learned Resourcefulness Scale and the Performance Scale

		Contextual Performance	Task Performance
Implementing Planned Behavior	r	0,215	0,057
	p	0,024*	0,554
Mood-Management	r	0,032	-0,043
	p	0,742	0,659
Management of Unwanted Thoughts	r	0,039	-0,037

	p	0,684	0,699
Impulse Management and Implementation of Planned Behavior	r	0,088	0,015
	p	0,362	0,875
Self-Sufficiency and Self-Support	r	0,094	0,02
	p	0,329	0,837
Pain-Management	r	0,116	0,027
	p	0,226	0,781
Delay of Gratification	r	0,179	0,072
	p	0,061	0,457
Seeking Help	r	-0,013	-0,068
	p	0,896	0,48
Favorable Interpretation of Events	r	0,017	0,037
	p	0,86	0,701
Careful Supervision	r	0,098	-0,03
	p	0,31	0,752
Flexible Planning	r	-0,039	-0,001
	p	0,686	0,993
Seeking a Supervisor	r	-0,024	-0,097
	p	0,806	0,315

Following the analyses conducted, there was no significant relationship between the dimensions of the learned resourcefulness scale and the impression management scale. Therefore, the H2 hypothesis of the study was not supported.

Table 6: Relationship Between the Dimensions of the Learned Resourcefulness Scale and the Impression Management Scale

		Seeking Pity	seeking sympathy by Displaying Personal Qualities	Trying to Act as a Model Employee	Seeking Respect through Forced Means	Owning up to One's Work
Implementing of Planned Behavior/Activities	r	0,045	0,006	0,026	0,047	0,038
	p	0,642	0,95	0,784	0,623	0,692
Mood-Management	r	0,104	0,091	0,076	0,104	0,130
	p	0,277	0,343	0,43	0,281	0,177
Management of Unwanted Thoughts	r	0,072	0,057	0,102	0,091	0,115

	p	0,457	0,551	0,291	0,346	0,233
Impulse-Management and Implementation of Planned Behavior	r	0,129	0,072	0,050	0,104	0,088
	p	0,18	0,453	0,604	0,279	0,363
Self-Sufficiency and Self-Support	r	0,129	0,069	0,037	0,120	0,117
	p	0,180	0,472	0,698	0,211	0,223
Pain Management	r	0,096	0,034	0,06	0,108	0,086
	p	0,318	0,728	0,534	0,261	0,370
Delay of Gratification	r	0,025	0,011	0,054	0,034	0,005
	p	0,792	0,906	0,576	0,726	0,961
Seeking Help	r	0,027	0,003	0,042	0,009	0,028
	p	0,780	0,978	0,666	0,923	0,768
Favorable Interpretation of events	r	0,135	0,145	0,134	0,129	0,167
	p	0,161	0,13	0,162	0,181	0,082
Careful Supervision	r	0,102	0,077	0,106	0,133	0,131
	p	0,290	0,423	0,272	0,165	0,174
Flexibility in Planning	r	-0,014	-0,039	0,02	-0,036	-0,069
	p	0,881	0,686	0,832	0,707	0,474
Seeking a Supervisor	r	0,071	0,066	0,092	0,065	0,098
	p	0,461	0,495	0,34	0,498	0,307

Following the analyses conducted, the following relationship between dimensions of the impression management scale and the performance scale were determined: a weak negative significant relationship (19%) between seeking pity and contextual performance, ($p=0.047$), a weak negative significant relationship (20.8%) between seeking respect through forced means and contextual performance ($p=0.029$), and a weak negative relationship(19.7%) between owning up to one’s work and contextual performance ($p=0.039$). In addition to these, there was no other significant relationship between the dimensions of the impression management scale and contextual or task performance. Therefore, hypothesis H3 was not supported.

Table 7: Relationship Between the Impression Management Scale Scale Dimensions and the Performance Scale

		Contextual Performance	Task Performance
Seeking Pity	r	-0,190	-0,136
	p	0,047*	0,156
Seeking Sympathy By Displaying One’s	r	-0,112	-0,034

Qualities	p	0,244	0,724
Trying to Act as a Model Employee	r	-0,176	-0,133
	p	0,066	0,167
Seeking Respect through Forced Means	r	-0,208	-0,18
	p	0,029*	0,06
Owning up to One's Work	r	-0,197	-0,167
	p	0,039*	0,081

When conducting a mediation test analysis, Baron and Kenny's three-step rational process (1986) requires that (1) the independent variable should affect the mediator variable, (2) the independent variable should affect the independent variable, (3) when the mediator variable is included, the impact of the independent factor should not decrease. When the analysis was conducted according to this process, since learned resourcefulness had no significant effect on performance, the required conditions were not met. Therefore it was understood that impression management tactics do not play a mediatory role in the relationship between learned resourcefulness and performance. As a result, hypothesis H4 was not supported.

5. CONCLUSION

In this study, where the effects of learned resourcefulness on performance and the mediatory role of impression management tactics on these effects were explored in a group of private bank employees in Istanbul, four hypotheses were suggested and tested. The analyses conducted revealed that a positive relationship existed between *implementation of planned behavior*, a dimension of learned resourcefulness, and contextual performance ($r=0.215$, $p=0.024$). No other relationship was found between the other dimensions of learned resourcefulness and performance. Therefore, the hypothesis suggesting a relationship between the learned resourcefulness of the bank employees and their performances was not supported.

The study, of which the major goal was to investigate the effects of learned resourcefulness on performance and to determine the role of impression management tactics on these effects, concluded that there was no mediatory role of the impression tactics on the relationship between learned resourcefulness and performance, as the requirements were not met to conduct a mediation test, which required a significant effect of learned resourcefulness on performance as a pre-requisite. Although in the literature prior tests on learned resourcefulness were primarily conducted on students, educators, health-care workers or those who benefit from health-care services, such as patients, the elderly and disabled individuals, no tests conducted on bank employees were encountered.

Although yielding meaningful results, the study did have its limitations, one of which was the sample population (n=110). The study's limited number of subjects prevented generalizations from being made about the results of the study. Another limitation was the impact of time constraints on the study, which resulted in the sampling having to be done in the same organization. This limitation required us to analyze the results within a particularly narrow framework that had to take certain restrictive factors into consideration, such as the structure of the sampling and the social structure of the organization of the sampling. In future studies conducted on this subject, larger sample sizes and greater diversity of businesses would allow for commentary with a wider perspective.

REFERENCES

- Akgün, S. (2004), The Effects of Situation and Learned Resourcefulness on Coping Responses, *Social Behavior & Personality: An International Journal*, 32, 5, p. 441-448.
- Baron, R.M.,Kenny, D.A. (1986), The moderator mediator variable distinction in social psychological research,1, p.1173-1182.
- Basım, H. N., Tatar, İ. (2006), Kamuda İzlenim Yönetimi: Karşılaştırmalı Bir Çalışma, *Amme İdaresi Dergisi*, 39,4, Ankara, p.225-244.
- Bingöl, D. (2003), İnsan kaynakları yönetimi, Beta Yayınları, 5. Baskı, İstanbul, p.322.
- Bolino, M.C., Turnley, W.H. (1999), Measuring impression management in organizations: A scale development based on the Jones and Pittman Taxonomy, *Organizational Research Methods*, 2, p.187-206.
- Çakır, Ö. (2009), Öğrenilmiş Güçlülük ve Çalışma Yaşamı, Çalışma Yaşamında Davranış, *Umuttepe Yayınları*, İzmir, p.147-165.
- Dağ, İ. (1991), Rosenbaum'un Öğrenilmiş Güçlülük Ölçeği'nin Üniversite Öğrencileri İçin Güvenirliği ve Geçerliği, *Türk Psikiyatri Dergisi*, 2, 4, p.269-274.
- Demir, K. (2002), Türkiye'deki Resmi ve Özel Lise Öğretmenlerinin İzlenim Yönetimi, *Yayınlanmamış Doktora Tezi*, Ankara Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü, Ankara
- Doğan, Y. (2005), Organizasyonlarda Pozitif ve Negatif Duygusallığın Çalışanların Görev ve Bağlamsal Performansları Üzerine Etkisini Belirlemeye Yönelik Kayseri'de Bir Araştırma, *Yüksek Lisans Tezi*, Erciyes Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Kayseri.
- Drory, A., Zaidman, N. (2007), Impression Management Behavior: Effects of the Organizational System, *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 22, 3, p.290-308.
- Foster, J. J. (2002), *Data Analysis*. Thousand Oaks: Sage
- Gardner, W.L. (1992), Lessons in Organizational Dramaturgy: The Art of Impression Management, *Organizational Dynamics*, 21,1, p.33-46.
- Goodman, S. A., Svyantek, D.J. (1999), Person-Organization Fit and Contextual Performance: Do Shared Values Matter, *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 55, p.254-275.
- Gürbüz, S., Yüksel, M. (2008), Çalışma Ortamında Duygusal Zeka: İş Performansı, İşTatmini, Örgütsel Vatandaşlık Davranışı ve Bazı Demografik Özelliklerle İlişkisi, *Doğuş Üniversitesi Dergisi*, 9, 2, İstanbul, p.174-190.

- Jones, E.E., Pittman, T.S. (1982), "Toward a General Theory of Strategic Self-presentation", Ed. Suls J., *Psychological Perspectives on the Self*, Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum, p.231-261.
- Kalaycı, Ş. (2006), *SPSS Uygulamalı Çok Değişkenli İstatistik Teknikleri*, Asil Yayınevi, Ankara, p.74
- Kale, E. (2013), "Konaklama İşletmelerinde Öz Uyumun İş Performansına Etkisi: Yaşam Doyumunun Aracı Rolü", *Yönetim Bilimleri Dergisi*, Cilt: 11, Sayı: 21, p. 117-133.
- Kennett, D. J. (1994), "Academic Self-management Counselling: Preliminary Evidence for the Importance of Learned Resourcefulness on Program Success", *Studies on Higher Education*, 19, 3, p.295-307.
- Kennett, D. J., Keefer, K. (2006), "Impact of Learned Resourcefulness and Theories of Intelligence on Academic Achievement of University Students: An Integrated Approach", *Educational Psychology*, 26, 3, p. 441-457.
- Öcal, H., Karakılıç, N.Y. (2013), "Liderlik Tarzı, Strateji Seçimi ve Performans İlişkisi", 21. Ulusal Yönetim ve Organizasyon Kongresi Bildiri Kitabı, Nobel Yayıncılık, Ankara, p. 30.
- Özdevecioğlu, M., Kanıgür, S. (2009), "Çalışanların İlişki ve Görev Yönelimli Liderlik Algılamalarının Performansları Üzerindeki Etkileri", *KMU İİBF Dergisi*, Yıl:11, Sayı:16, p.53-83.
- Rosenbaum, M. A. (1980), "Schedule for assessing self-control behaviors: Preliminary findings", *Behavioral Therapy*, 11, p. 109-121.
- Sadler, M.E., Hunger, J. M., Miller, C.J. (2010), "Personality and Impression Management: Mapping the Multidimensional Personality Questionnaire onto 12 Self-Presentation Tactics", *Personality and Individual Differences*, 48, 5, p.623-628.
- Schutz, A. (1998), "Assertive, Offensive, Protective and Defensive Styles of Self-Presentation: A Taxonomy", *The Journal of Psychology*, 132, 6, p. 611-628.
- Smith, L., Davids, K. (1992), "Uncertainty and Resourcefulness in Performance Environments: A Theoretical Notes", *European Work and Organizational Psychologist*, 2, 4, p.331-344.