A Preliminary Psychometric Investigation on the Relational Approach to Work Scale

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to investigate the validity and reliability of the Turkish version of the Relational Approach to Work Scale (Matthew, Buontempo & Block, 2013). The participants of research were 294 (168 female and 126 male) university students. Results of confirmatory factor analysis demonstrated that the scale yielded 2 factors, as original form: (relational and independent; \( x^2 = 999.43, \text{df}= 273, \text{RMSEA} = .095, \text{CFI} = .96, \text{IFI} = .96, \text{NFI} = .96, \text{RFI} = .96, \text{NNFI} = .96, \text{SRMR} = .067 \)). The internal consistency coefficients were found as .93 for the relational subscale and as .91 for the independent subscale. The corrected item-total correlations of the scale ranged from .54 to .76. Overall findings demonstrated that this scale had high levels of validity and reliability and that it can be used as a valid and reliable instrument in order to measure the approach to work accurately. Further studies utilizing Relational Approach to Work Scale are important for its psychometric effectiveness.

Keywords: Relational approach to work, validity, reliability, confirmatory factor analysis.

Introduction

A common notion in behavioral sciences is that men and women are to have different approaches to the interpersonal relationships in many domains (Matthew, Buontempo, & Block, 2013). One of the prevalent theoretical frameworks for understanding those sex differences suggests that women have a predisposition and a stronger positive attitude for being relational and interdependent; whereas men have a stronger tendency for being independent and autonomous (Chodorow, 1989; Gilligan, 1982). This difference is seen as a result of social experiences, which are shaped by socio-cultural and institutional norms (Cross & Madson, 1997). For instance, as a result the gender experience, men and women identify with characteristics of feminine or masculine gender roles (Bem, 1974).

Another similar difference is in the process of self-construal, which is defined as the extent to which the individuals perceive their selves separate or connected from others (Markus & Kitayama, 1991); women usually have an interdependent and connected self-construal, whereas men usually have independent self-construal (Cross, Gore & Morris, 2003). In other words, men have relatively more individualist, egocentric and autonomous self-schemas; women, on the other hand have relatively more collectivist, sociocentric, and communal self-schemas (Josephs, Markus, & Tafarodi, 1992; Markus & Oyster man, 1989). Women has found to value qualities such as likeability and sociability in positive self-
evaluations in many studies (Cate & Sugawara, 1986; Marsh, Parker, & Barnes, 1985; Rosenberg & Simmons, 1975; Simmons & Rosenberg, 1975; Zuckerman, 1985)

Women across the world have difficulties in attaining and maintaining top managerial positions. The “glass ceiling” disabling women from reaching top management positions in organizations, has attracted attention from the scientific communities in the recent decades (Aycan, 2004; Morrison & von Glinow, 1990; Sümer, 2006). A possible explanation on these differences between the two genders is that women usually engage in relationship oriented skills and strategies, and this fact in turn, results in their underrepresentation in the top managerial positions (Matthew et al., 2013).

In many organizations, in employee recruitments, promotions, and other career-related processes, individual accomplishments are usually at the focus (Fletcher, 1998) and qualities like autonomy and self-responsibility which are usually associated with masculine gender role are highly valued as leader qualities (Bem, 1974, Kenney, Schwartz-Kenney & Blascovich, 1996). On the other hand, task-oriented and relationship oriented behaviors which are usually associated with feminine gender role are shown to be associated with leader effectiveness, yet the degree to which women benefit from this fact is difficult to figure out, due to the effect of various other variables such as discrimination based on sex role stereotypes (Brescoll, Dawson, & Uhlmann, 2010).

Approach to work can be defined as “preferences for the use of certain types of behaviors and strategies to get work done in organizations” (Matthew et al., 2013, p. 508). Approach to work is constituted by beliefs and values about effective task accomplishment strategies. Relational approach to work is a distinctive approach, which prioritizes interdependence, as opposed to independence, and mutual growth as opposed to individual growth (Baumeister & Sommer, 1997; Cross & Madson, 1997; Fletcher, 1998; Huff, 1990).

Some researchers claim that women have a relationship-oriented or relational approach to work (Buttner, 2001; Fletcher, 1998). Rosener (1990) summarizes the qualities of female leaders: they usually have an inclusive approach to leadership, have a positive attitude for sharing power and information, support the self-worth of subordinates, and they value enthusiasm for themselves and their employees. Those and other similar contributions were remarkable and carried on small study groups with qualitative designs (Matthew et al., 2013).

Many researchers elaborated on such sex differences in terms of individual behavior, yet there is a shortage of valid instruments measuring these aspects of organizational behavior within quantitative research designs (Matthew et al., 2013). Relational Approach to Work Scales (Matthew et al., 2013) is a two-dimensional (14 items for relational and 11 items for independent approach to work) 7-point Likert scale (from “1”strongly agree” to “7”strongly disagree”) was developed to address this perceived gap in the area, as a quantitative measure which was also developed after qualitative procedures. Matthew et al. (2013) found internal consistency coefficients as .82 and .75 for two subscales. The present study aims to adapt Relational Approach to Work Scales into Turkish and to examine its psychometric properties. It is expected that this scale would provide a measurement to assess approach to work of employees for researchers and practitioners in Turkey in various areas like management, social policies, education and behavioral sciences in general.

**Method**

**Participants**

The participants of research were 294 (168 female and 126 male) university students. Their ages ranged from 18 to 29 and the mean age of the participants was 20.8.
Procedure

Adaptation study of the Relational Approach to Work Scale into Turkish was based on the kind permission of Cynthia Trapani Matthew (2013). As the first step three specialists who were native Turkish speakers proficient in English translated English version into Turkish. The Turkish version of the scale was then translated back into English by three specialists who were blinded to the original scale and to the objective of the study. The differences between translated versions were evaluated and a satisfactory compliance with the original scale was achieved by consensus of the translators. Finally they discussed the Turkish form and along with some corrections this scale was prepared for validity and reliability analyses. In this study confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was executed to confirm the original scale’s structure in Turkish culture. Also concurrent validity and internal consistency reliability, the item-total correlations were examined. Data were analyzed using LISREL 8.54 and SPSS 13.0 program packages.

Results

Construct Validity

The results of confirmatory factor analysis indicated that the two-dimensional relational approach to work model fitted well ($\chi^2 = 999.43$, df = 273, RMSEA = .095, CFI = .96, IFI = .96, NFI = .95, RFI = .94, NNFI = .96, SRMR = .067). Factor loadings and path diagram of Turkish version of the Relational Approach to Work Scale are presented in Figure 1.

![Factor Loadings and Path Diagram for the Relational Approach to Work Scale](image_url)

**Figure 1.** Factor Loadings and Path Diagram for the Relational Approach to Work Scale
Reliability

The Cronbach’s α internal consistency coefficients were found as .93 for relational subscale and as .91 for independent subscale. The corrected item-total correlations of the scale ranged from .56 to .76 for the relational subscale; and from .54 to .72 for the independent subscale. The item analysis result and descriptive statistics are presented below table.

Table 1.1. The Item-Total Correlations

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Discussion

The purpose of this study was to adapt the Relational Approach to Work Scale into Turkish and examine its psychometric properties. Confirmatory factor analysis demonstrated that the factor structure was harmonized with the factor structure of the original scale. Thus, it can be said that the structural model of the scale, which consists of two factors, was well fit for the Turkish study group (Bentler and Bonett 1980; Hu and Bentler 1999; Schermelleh-Engel and Moosbrugger, 2003). The internal consistency coefficients of the scale were high (Büyüköztürk, 2010; Kline, 2000). Considering that item total correlations having values over .30; it is possible to state that item total correlations are adequate (Büyüköztürk, 2010). Overall findings demonstrated that this scale had high validity and reliability scores and that it may be used as a valid and reliable instrument in order to measure the approach to work precisely. Further studies utilizing Relational Approach to Work Scale are important for its psychometric effectiveness.

References


