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MODERATION OF GENDER ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TASK CHARACTERISTICS AND PERFORMANCE

Setyabudi Indartono
And
Chun-Hsi Vivian Chen

National Central University, Taiwan
setyabudiindaryono@msn.com
Email: setyabudi_indartono@uny.ac.id

Abstract

Gender as an individual characteristic has been used in many studies to provide some explanations of different effects on outcomes. Different effects of gender on employee's attitudes and behavior has been found in many studies. Recent study by Humphrey et al (2007) found out that successful work design innovation has positive impact on employee's behavior and attitudes such as performance, satisfaction, commitment, involvement, motivation, role perception of outcomes, anxiety and stress. However, few scholars have investigated the effects of gender on task characteristics and performance relationship. This study employed self efficacy theory to provide further insight into gender differences in this relationship. Work design proposed by Morgesson (2006) was used to explore task characteristics of job design. Structural equation modeling was used to analyze the model. The result showed that male and female employees have different effects on task characteristics and performance relationship. Implications of the findings and suggestions for future research are discussed

Keywords: Task Characteristics, Performance, Gender

Introduction

Work design becomes something of a fad among leaders and organizational consultants. The practice of job design produced popular programs such as TQM and reengineering, and human capital management (Deming, 1986; Juran et al 1988; Waldman, 1994; Hammer et al, 1993; Lepak & Snell, 1999). Job was designed to simplify employee activities at work, manage social-interpersonal daily work, and help to achieve the goal of work efficiently. Hence successful work design innovation had positive implications on employee's behavior and attitudes such as performance, satisfaction, commitment, involvement, motivation, perception of outcomes, anxiety and stress (Humphrey et al 2007).

Conceptually, employees and organization's conditions influence the design of job (Humphrey et al, 2007, MacKinnon, 2008). Human resources department sometimes change the requirement and characteristics of the job to increase organizational effectiveness and business competitiveness, and improve employee capability and competency fit so as to accelerate their performance achievement (O'Reilly et al 1991; Chatman, 1991; Edward, 1996; Judge, 1996; Saks et al, 1997). Employee's capability and competency fit on the job is related to individual characteristics such as tenure, gender, ages, job experiences, and level of education. Hence scholars have investigated employee's cohort and demographic characteristics in order to provide explanations of when and why workers have different performance at work (Frazier et

all, 2004; Judge, 2007). Gender has been used in social studies to provide explanations for different effects on outcomes. It was found to have different effects several contexts ranging from interpersonal relationships to household decision-making (Qualls, 1987, Baghat et al, 2008). For example, females were known to be more expressive than male, and this was manifested in their socio-emotional behavior which in turn had affect on their attitude and behavior at work (Meyers-Levy and Maheswaran, 1991).

Empirically, correlation between job design and job satisfaction, work motivation, performance, and absenteeism, was found in various studies. Furthermore, various jobs also had different affects on job design. Perker (1998) outline job performance based on self-efficacy. Employees who feel confident are able to carry out broader and more proactive roles, and achieve higher performance. However, Morgeson et al, (2008) found out that job characteristics and performance relationship were influenced by the moderation effects of individual differences such as urban-rural, middle-class norm, community size, religiosity, growth need strength, ability level, quality of interpersonal relationships, and effectiveness in terms of the stable tendency to experience emotions. Male and female employees were found to have an inverse working achievement on the job. For example, Haswel et al. (1991) and Bernardi (2008) indicated that females have better achievement at work, whereas O'neil et al. (2008) found that male have better working performance. Different performance of male and female was also because of

differences in the type, nature and requirements of the job (Meece, 1991; Pajares et al, 1994; Wigfield et al 1996; Eisenberget al, 1996; Wilson et al, 2009). However few scholars have investigated gender to explore the effects of job characteristics innovation on job performance.

Researchers found that male and female employees have different sensitivity, expressive behaviors, and motivational response on the job (Haswell et al., 1999; Lysonski and Gaidis, 1991; Whipple and Swords, 1992; Bernardi, 2008). This study employed self efficacy of motivation theory to provide further insight into gender differences and outcome relationships (Deci et al, 1985; Baghat et al, 2008). Hence, employee's belief of their capabilities to perform the task will influence the achievement of their job performance. Therefore, it is worthy of exploring whether the task characteristics may engage employee's gender-base to achieve higher performance. Does a difference in gender of employees influence different beliefs to achieve higher performance within certain task characteristics of jobs? Accordingly, by employing self efficacy theory, this study has therefore attempted to investigate the relationship between task characteristics and performance moderated by gender.

Task Characteristics of Work Design and Performance

Work design has emerged as a topic of central importance in the management discipline. Interest was prompted by concerns that work design produced work quality effects on employee well-being and performance (Hollman, 2009). A job can be defined as a collection of related

positions that are similar in terms of the work performed or goals served by the organization (Brannick, Levine, & Morgeson, 2007). Work design thus refers to the content and structure of jobs that is performed by employees (Oldham, 1996). The focus of work design research tends to be on the tasks and activities that job incumbents perform on a day to day basis. Task characteristics are primarily attributable to the traditional focus on job design of the work itself. Recent research demonstrated the importance of task characteristics (Humphrey et al., 2007; Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006).

Conceptually the task characteristics included five dimensions that make jobs more satisfying for workers: autonomy, skill variety, task identity, task significance, and feedback from the job (Morgeson and Humphrey, 2008). Autonomy is the freedom an individual should have in carrying out work. Skill variety reflects the extent of which various skills are needed for job performance. Task identity is the extent of which an individual completes an entire piece of work. Task significance reflects the degree of which a job impacts the lives of others, both inside and outside the organization. Feedback from the job is the extent of which a job imparts information about an individual's performance.

Empirically, Fried and Ferris (1987) found that dimensions of task characteristics were strongly related to job satisfaction, growth satisfaction, and internal work motivation, with weaker relationships to job performance and absenteeism. Partially support to Fried and Ferris,

Humphrey et al (2007), found that all five motivational characteristics were positively related to job satisfaction, growth satisfaction, and internal work motivation. Autonomy was related to objective performance. In contrast, autonomy, task identity, task significance, and feedback from the job had non-zero correlations with subjective performance. However, they were all related to absenteeism, but had zero significance on skill variety and task significance.

Task characteristics were expected to have effects on employee behavior such as decreased absenteeism and increased job performance. Job performance is a commonly used, yet even the concept is poorly defined. It refers to whether a person performs their job well. Performance is an extremely important criterion that influences organizational outcomes and success. Among the most commonly accepted theories of job performance are theories from the work of John P. Campbell and colleagues (1990, 1993) who describe job performance as an individual level variable. That is, performance is something a single person does. Conceptually, task characteristics were closely related to high performance achievement. Autonomy is ability to carry out work freely. Skill variety implies performing a job with different skills. Using task identity, employees can complete a whole piece of work. Nevertheless, interaction of task significance and other characteristics are able to influence performance achievement. Feedback from the job is able to impart information about an individual's performance (Humphrey et al, 2007).

Empirically, Morgeson et al (2008) concluded that overall these five task characteristics have effect on performance. Autonomy has been linked to both objective and subjective performance ratings. Skill variety does have the expected effect on keeping workers motivated, involved and satisfied which in turn supports achievement of higher performance. Task identity can be useful information to start and finish the work and it is related to performance evaluation. Task significance is positively related to subjective performance. Nonetheless, feedback from the job is able to timely provide reliable information and direct accurate feedback from the job performed.

However, individually, a range of knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics (KSAOs) are needed to perform a job. Job knowledge reflects the declarative and procedural knowledge of the job and role, whereas technical skill reflects the capability to perform the work itself. Knowledge of the job and technical skills will appear to be essential if one work effectively in a job. Whereas, Self efficacy theory employed the understanding on the level of employee belief in order to achieve higher performance with their actual skill level (Gist & Mitchell, 1992). The level of employee belief found in the task experience is the most important aspect (Tesluk and Jacobs, 1998). Task experience reflects the amount of time spent performing a task and the number of times the task has been performed. Task experience confers job knowledge, and thus provides workers with the ability to effectively enact their task

responsibilities. Therefore, it is likely that having higher task experience will help workers perform successfully in jobs that have breadth or depth of knowledge, whereas technical skills are reflected in the capacity to perform the broader roles. It was implied by many of the task on work characteristics. Hence, it is directly related to the performance of work (Morgeson, Reider, & Campion, 2005). It is also supported by Burr and Cordery (2001) who provided evidence on the importance of further skills of self-management. Therefore, the theory of efficacy strengthens the evidence of task characteristics and performance relationship. Based on the aforesaid discussion, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 1: task characteristics related to performance positively

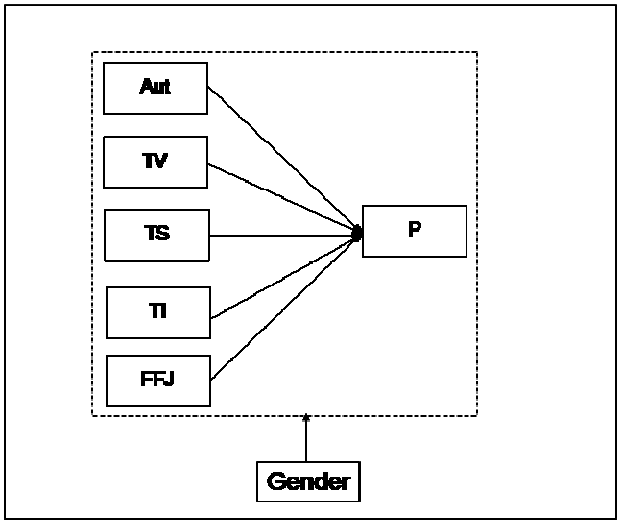
Gender of employee is known as one of the controlled variable in researches. Different effects of gender on employee's attitude and behavior have been found in many studies. Gender was found to have an effect on outcomes such as performance, commitment, satisfaction, involvement, and stress (Bernardi, 2008, Baghat, 2008, William, 2008, Tanriverdi, 2009; Burke, et al, 2008, Jones et al, 2009). For example, job career of female employees has been identified as pattern of their larger-life contexts, families and careers, career paths patterns, and human and social capital are critical factors for their career (O'Neil et al, 2008). Empirically, O'Neil et al (2008) indicated that females tend to be more expressive (Meyers-Levy and Maheswaran, 1991), and sensitive (Haswell et al., 1999; Lysonski and Gaidis, 1991; Whipple and Swords, 1992,

Bernardi, 2008). Accordingly, females respond to work design and thus achieve work performance differently from male (Haswel et al, 1991; Meece, 1991; Pajares et al, 1994; Wigfield et al 1996; Eisenberget al, 1996; Bernardi, 2008; O'Neil et al, 2008; Wilson et al, 2009)

Self-efficacy beliefs function as an important set of proximal determinants of human motivation, affect, and action [which] operate on action through motivational, cognitive, and affective intervening processes. Identification allows the observers to feel a one-to-one connection with the individual being imitated and will be more likely to achieve those imitations if the observers feel that they have the ability to follow through with the mimicked action. It is believed that if how some future event turns out is under their control, they may or may not believe that they are capable of behaving in a way that will produce the desired result. Research found evidence that male may have a greater believe that they control their life related to academic achievement (Schultz & Schultz, 2005). Expressiveness of female employee suggested reinforces the autonomy and strengthens the task variety of job (O'Neil, 2008). Besides, sensitivity characteristics of female precipitates precisely impart information on performance and may influence the degree of live impact (Bernardi, 2008). Accordingly, self-efficacy theory strengthened the evidence of task characteristics and performance relationship and therefore it proposed that:

Hypothesis 2: Male and female employees have different effects performance

Hypothesis 3: Male and female employee have different effects on the task characteristics and performance relationship



Aut=autonomy, TV=task variety, TS=task significant, TI=task identity, FFJ=feedback from job, P=performance

Figure 1
Model Of Moderating Of Gender On Autonomy, Task Variety, Task Significant, Task Identity, Feedback From Job, And Performance Relationship

Methods

Sample

This study collected 412 responses from 750 questionnaires distributed to various businesses (55% response rate). They were approximately 35.16 years old and worked for 13.36 years, 299 (72.6%) were married, and 150 (36.4%) were men. From the participants 145 (35.2%) graduated from college, 121 (29.4%) held a graduate degree, 21 (5.1%) held a master degree and 32 (7.8%) held a doctorate degree.

Measures

Items were written by the authors or obtained from previous research. After reviewing of words, content, and so forth, 31 item sets for total items were retained for inclusion in the instrument. Responses were made on a 5-point Likert-type scale with scale anchors ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5(strongly agree). Task characteristics were measured using 24 items taken from Morgeson & Humphrey's (2006) WDQ. Participants were asked i.e., "The job allows me to make my own decisions about how to schedule my work". The five task characteristics dimension included work scheduling autonomy, decision-making autonomy, work-method autonomy, task variety, task significant, task identity and feedback from job. Performance was measured using 7 items taken from William and Andersons (1991). Participants supervisor were asked i.e., "Adequately completes assigned duties".

Result and Analysis

Measurement Model Analysis

This study tested the assumptions underlying the use of structural equation modeling. Confirmatory analysis using the traditional factor loading of SPSS generated the formulation of each construct. Initial solution with KMO and Bartlett's test of sphericity, maximum likelihood extraction method, and varimax rotation was used in this CFA. The result on the Table 1 extended the Hackman (1974) study by combining the work scheduling autonomy, decision-

making autonomy, and work-method autonomy into one single dimension "autonomy".

Table 1

Rotated factors and loading for task characteristics

		Autonomy	Performance	Task Variance	Task Identity	Task Significant	Feedback from Job
Autonomy	Autonomy_1	0.520					
	Autonomy_2	0.588					
	Autonomy_3	0.616					
	DMA_1	0.658					
	DMA_2	0.679					
	DMA_3	0.672					
	WMA_1	0.642					
	WMA_2	0.661					
	WMA_3	0.642					
Task Variety	TV_1			0.610			
	TV_2			0.794			
	TV_3			0.765			
	TV_4			0.786			
Task Significant	TS_1					0.409	
	TS_2					0.423	
	TS_3					0.923	
	TS_4					0.782	
Task Identity	TI_1				0.574		
	TI_2				0.693		
	TI_3				0.807		
	TI_4				0.717		
Feedback from Job	FFJ_1						0.519
	FFJ_2						0.889
	FFJ_3						0.803
Performance	P1		0.734				
	P2		0.711				
	P3		0.726				
	P4		0.700				
	P5		0.609				
	P6						
	P7						

DMA= Decision making autonomy, WMA=work-method autonomy, TV=task variety, TS=task significant, TI=task identity, FFJ=feedback from job

A confirmatory factor analysis using AMOS 7.0 was conducted to test the measurement model. The chi-squared (χ^2 = 279) was significant ($p < 0.05$; Bollen 1989). The ratio of chi-

square to degree of freedom (df.) was 1.516 for measurement model not exceed 2 (Marsh and Hovecar 1985). Goodness-of-fit of the model represented on the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) .039 and the standardized root mean square residual (RMR) = .028. RMSEA values was less than .06 and RMR values was less than .08 therefore, indicating a good fit of the model to the data (Hu & Bentler, 1999, Browne & Cudeck, 1992; Steiger, 1990). The goodness-of-fit index (GFI) = .926, the adjustment goodness-of-fit index (AGFI) = .900, the comparative fit index (CFI) =.970, Non-normed Fit Index (NFI) = .927, and the Tucker–Lewis index (TLI) =.963. According to Marcoulides and schumacker's (1996) standard of fitting, the result of CFA indicated a satisfactory fit for the measurement model. Second order analysis confirmed the single factor of task characteristics was with the following model of fit GFI=.920, AGFI=.891, RMR=.044 CFI= .953, TLI = .942, IFI= .953, RFI=.902, NFI=920, and RMSEA= .0457 (Kline, 2004; Byrne, 2006).

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is adopted to test for the quality and adequacy of the measurement model (Anderson and garbing, 1988). Therefore, this study investigates reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Evidence for the unidimensionality of each construct included appropriate items that loaded at least 0.524 on their respective hypothesized component and loaded larger than .30 on other components in a factor of analysis. In addition, the overall goodness of fit supported unidimensionality (Steenkamp and van Trijp 1991).

Convergent validity was supported by all loadings being significant ($p < 0.01$) and all SMC (square of multiple correlation) exceeding 0.275 (Hildebrandt 1987). This study assessed reliability jointly for all items of a construct by computing the composite reliability and average variance extracted (Steenkamp and van Trijp 1991). Cronbach's α is the most widely used criteria to measure the reliability of the items for each construct (Cronbach's, 1991). The Cronbach's α of constructs are shown in table 2. Cronbach's α of perception of Autonomy = .867 (eight six items), Task Variety = .866 (four items), Task Significant= .798 (three items), Task Identity = .878 (four items), Feedback from Job = .817 (three items), and performance= =.830 (five items) are all greater than 0.7. Hence internal consistency of each measurement construct has been achieved.

Table 2

Correlations and Cronbach α

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Gender	-							
2. Autonomy	.018	**0.867**						
3. Task variety	.045	.420**	**0.866**					
4. Task significant	.040	.428**	.332**	**0.798**				
5. Task identity	.029	.394**	.380**	.479**	**0.878**			
6. Feedback from Job	-.037	.240**	.236**	.318**	.494**	**0.817**		
7. Task Characteristics	.029	.698**	.694**	.741**	.756**	.634**	**0.736**	
8. Performance	.152**	.183**	.144**	.192**	.216**	.252**	.277**	**0.830**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Cronbach α value are shown in parentheses

Convergent validity is determined by the reliability of each construct and the average variance extracted (AVE) of each construct. Anderson and Gerbing (1988) suggested that convergent validity can be assessed from the measurement model by determining whether each indicator's estimated pattern coefficient on its posited underlying construct factor is significant or not. Table 3 revealed that each item's factor loading is more than 0.5 and their loading range is between 0.55 and 0.99, which are in line with Anderson and Gerbing's (1988) suggestion. Variance extracted is not only the average percentage of variation explained among the items, but also a summary measure of convergence among a set of items representing a latent construct. Variance extracted is computed as the total of all squared standardized factor loadings divided by the number of items. In other words, it is the average squared factor loading. Fornell and Larcker (1981) suggested that variance extracted of 0.5 or greater than squared multiple correlations is good. Table 4 shows AVE exceeding correlations in all squared multiple correlations. Therefore the indicator variables of this study have a good convergent validity. Discriminant validity describes the degree to which the operationalization is not similar to (diverges from) other operationalizations that it theoretically should not be similar to. Campbell and Fiske (1959) introduced the concept of discriminant validity in their discussion on evaluation of validity test. They stressed the importance of using both discriminant and convergent validation techniques when assessing new tests. A successful evaluation of Table 3

Table 3

Convergent Validity and Reliability

			t-value	SMC	C.R.	AVE
Autonomy	Autonomy_2	0.568		0.323	**0.867**	**0.459**
	Autonomy_3	0.669	12.630	0.448		
	DMA_1	0.657	10.460	0.432		
	DMA_2	0.713	9.206	0.508		
	DMA_3	0.721	9.201	0.520		
	WMA_1	0.693	9.605	0.480		
	WMA_2	0.681	9.315	0.464		
	WMA_3	0.705	8.780	0.497		
Task Variety	TV_1	0.658		0.433	**0.866**	**0.621**
	TV_2	0.828	14.244	0.686		
	TV_3	0.837	14.248	0.701		
	TV_4	0.815	13.885	0.664		
Task Significant	TS_2	0.524		0.275	**0.798**	**0.646**
	TS_3	0.898	10.114	0.806		
	TS_4	0.926	10.210	0.857		
Task Identity	TI_1	0.692		0.479	**0.878**	**0.635**
	TI_2	0.725	16.693	0.526		
	TI_3	0.890	16.521	0.792		
	TI_4	0.862	15.948	0.743		
Feedback from Job	FFJ_1	0.602		0.362	**0.817**	**0.631**
	FFJ_2	0.933	12.325	0.870		
	FFJ_3	0.812	12.729	0.659		
Performance	ip1	0.744		0.554	**0.830**	**0.493**
	ip2	0.716	13.424	0.513		
	ip3	0.716	13.252	0.513		
	ip4	0.718	12.996	0.516		
	ip5	0.608	11.333	0.370		

DMA= Decision making autonomy, WMA=work-method autonomy, TV=task variety, TS=task significant, TI=task identity, FFJ=feedback from job

discriminant validity shows that a test of a concept is not highly correlated with other tests designed to measure theoretically different concepts. In showing that two scales do not correlate, it is necessary to correct for attenuation in the correlation due to measurement error. It is possible to calculate the extent of which the two scales overlap by using the following formula where r_{xy} is correlation between x and y, r_{xx} is the reliability of x, and r_{yy} is the reliability of y:

$$\frac{r_{xy}}{\sqrt{r_{xx} \cdot r_{yy}}}$$

Although there is no standard value for discriminant validity, a result less than .85 tells us that discriminant validity likely exists between the two scales. A result greater than .85, however, tells us that the two constructs overlap greatly and they are likely measuring the same thing. Therefore, the results shown in table 4, demonstrated adequate unidimensionality, convergent validity, reliability, and discriminant validity.

Table 4

Average Variance Extracted, square correlation, and

Discriminate Validity

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Autonomy	**0.459**	0.176	0.183	0.155	0.058	0.033
2. Task variety	0.485	**0.621**	0.110	0.144	0.056	0.021
3. Task significant	0.515	0.399	**0.646**	0.229	0.101	0.037
4. Task identity	0.452	0.436	0.572	**0.635**	0.244	0.047
5. Feedback from Job	0.285	0.281	0.394	0.583	**0.631**	0.064
6. Performance	0.216	0.170	0.236	0.253	0.306	**0.493**

AVE value are shown in parentheses

Discriminate validity are shown on the left side AVE value

HypothesisTtesting

Table 2 shows that task characteristics are positively related to performance. Gender was also found to be positively related to performance, implying that 262 female employees (mean=4.04) achieved higher performance (t value = -107.427, p<.001) than 150 male counterparts (mean=3.884). Thus hypothesis 1 and 2 were supported.

Hierarchical moderated regression analysis was conducted to test the mediating effect of employee gender. Table 5 shows the result of the estimations of the main effect and the moderating effect of gender. The result indicates that moderating effect of gender is significant for dimension of autonomy, task identity, task significant, feedback from job and construct of task characteristics. Although female employees achieved higher performance, the moderation of gender shows that effect of task characteristics and its dimensions on performance were higher for male employees than female employees.

Table 5

Testing result of main effect and moderating effect of gender

	Performance						
	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7
Main effect							
Autonomy	.053	.334**					
Task variety	.032		.194*				
Task significant	.073			.323**			
Task identity	.061				.377**		
Feedback from Job	.179**					.454**	
Task Characteristics							.509**
Moderator							
Gender		.146**	.145**	.142**	.144**	.165**	.140**
Interaction effect							
Autonomy x gender		-.210*					
Task variety x gender			-.071				
Task significant x gender				-.177*			
Task identity x gender					-.198*		
Feedback from Job x gender						-.235**	
Task Characteristics x gender							-.291**
R^2	.085	.059	.044	.070	.080	.106	.119
ΔR^2	.085	.012	.002	.011	.012	.017	.025
ΔF	7.559	5.326	.772	5.400	5.268	7.735	11.788
p	.000	.022	.380	.021	.022	.006	.001

M1=main effect model; M2= Model of moderation effect of Autonomy; M3= Model of moderation effect of Task Variety; M4=Model of moderation effect of Task Significant; M5= Model of moderation effect of Task identity; M6= Model of moderation effect of Feedback from job; M7= Model of moderation effect of Task characteristics

Moderation effect of gender analyzed using structural equation modeling shown in table 6 was also found equal. To test hypothesis-3, this study built separate structural models for the male and female sub-samples, and conducted tests of moderation to determine whether the respective path coefficients differed. Table 6 summarizes the analyses and results. The procedure that this study used was as follows for each test: this study constructed two multiple-sample models. In the first model, all paths were unconstrained between the two groups. This is the "no constraints" or baseline model in Table 6. In the second model, this study constrained the relevant path to be equal for both sub-samples. This is the "equal paths" model. The difference in chi-square values between the two models provides a test for the equality of the path for the two groups. Similarly, the path is stronger for the male than for female. Gender moderate task characteristics and its dimensions are related to performance. Thus, hypothesis-3 is supported for moderating variables.

Figure 1 provides graphical representation of moderating effects of gender. The graphs show that when the construct of task characteristics is high, male employees demonstrate higher performance, than female employees. Whereas on high and low level of autonomy, task significant, task identity, and feedback from job, female employees demonstrate higher performance than male employees. Male consistently shows higher sloop (γ) of all task

characteristics and performance relationship.

Table 6

SEM Moderation effect of Gender on Task Characteristics and Performance relationship

Path	Gender	
	Male	**Female**
Baseline (unconstrained) model: χ^2 (61) = 243.719 Constrained model: χ^2 (122) = 304.227		
Autonomy → Performance	γ = .204	γ = .113
	t = -2.711, p =.001	
RMR=.045, GFI= . 888, AGFI= .833, NFI=.864, RFI=.825, IFI=.908, TLI=.881, CFI=. 907, RMSEA=.066		
Baseline (unconstrained) model: χ^2 (26) = 29.746 Constrained model: χ^2 (52) = 55.028		
Task Variety → Performance	γ = .204	γ = .141
	t =-.768 , p =.17	
RMR=.016, GFI= .984, AGFI= .973, NFI=.980, RFI=.973, IFI=.997, TLI=.997, CFI= . 997, RMSEA=.019		
Baseline (unconstrained) model: χ^2 (19) = 35.911 Constrained model: χ^2 (38) = 55.543		
Task significant → Performance	γ = .340.	γ = .018
	t = -3.020, p =.001	
RMR=.022, GFI=. 979, AGFI= .960, NFI=.973, RFI=.960, IFI=.987, TLI=.981, CFI . 987, RMSEA=.047		
Baseline (unconstrained) model: χ^2 (26) = 103.054 Constrained model: χ^2 (52) = 126.996		
Task Identity → Performance	γ =.363	γ = .153
	t = -.2.455, p =.024	
RMR=.017, GFI= .950, AGFI=.913, NFI=.939, RFI=.916, IFI=.954, TLI=.936, CFI=954, RMSEA=.085		
Baseline (unconstrained) model: χ^2 (19) = 54.667 Constrained model: χ^2 (38) = 82.723		
Feedback from job →	γ = .375	Γ = .204
Performance	t = -1.996 , p =.043	
RMR=.030, GFI= .969, AGFI= .942, NFI=.957, RFI=.937, IFI=.972, TLI=.958, CFI=.972, RMSEA=.068		
Baseline (unconstrained) model: χ^2 (34) = 74.037 Constrained model: χ^2 (68) = 113.038		
Task characteristics →	γ = .549	Γ = .217
Performance	t = -2.852, p =.004	
RMR=.024, GFI= .949, AGFI= .917, NFI=.905, RFI=.874, IFI=.960, TLI=.946, CFI .959, RMSEA=.040		

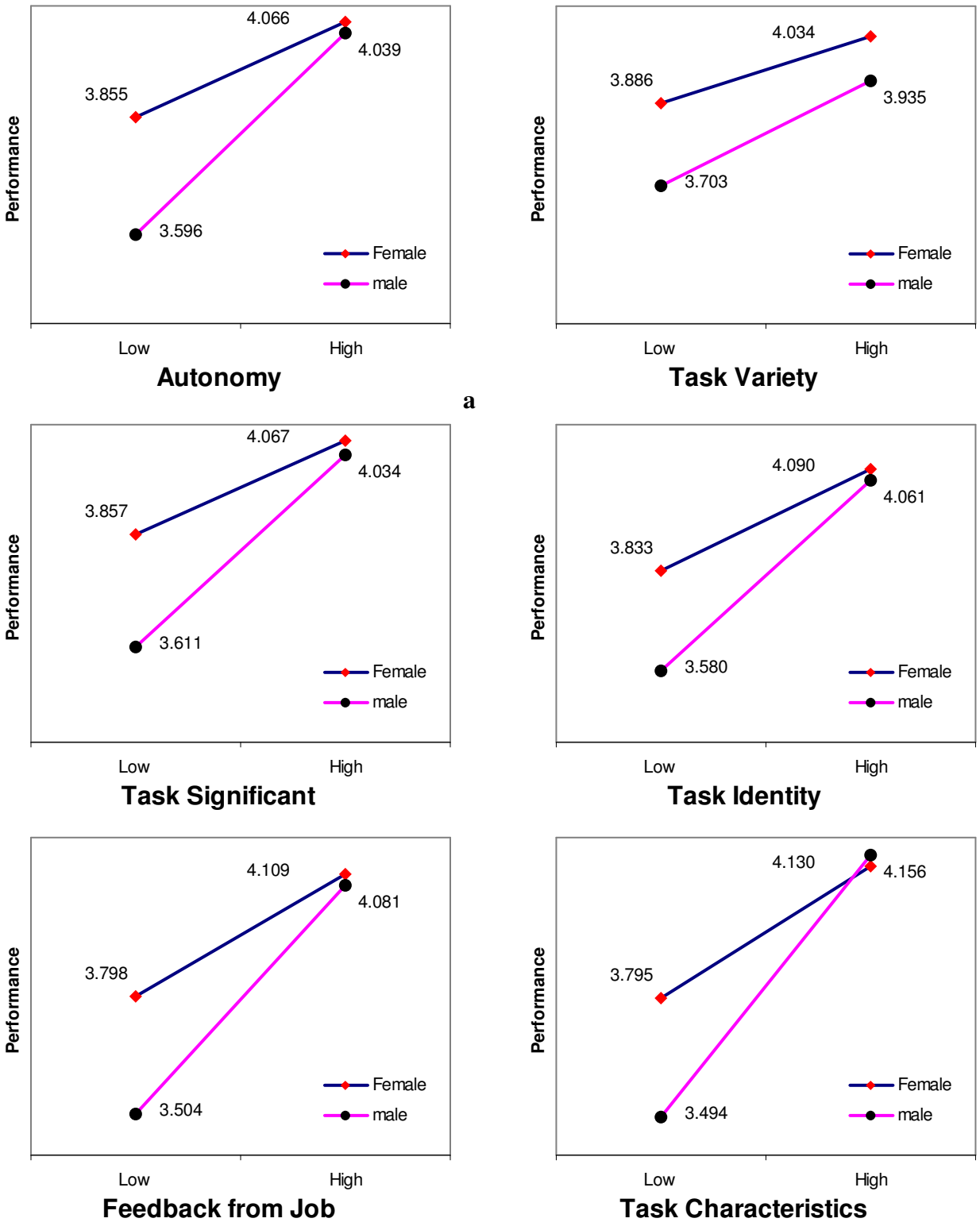


Figure 2

Moderating of gender on task characteristics, autonomy, task variety, task significant, task identity, feedback from job, and performance relationship

Conclusion

Discussion

This study employed self-efficacy theory to investigate the different effects of task characteristics on the performance achieved by gender. Although female employees were found to achieve higher performance than male employees, the results of this study revealed that male employees have higher effect of task characteristics on performance. Therefore male employees indicated to be more confident than female employees. This result is consistent with the findings by Meece (1991), Pajares et al (1994) and a study by Wigfield et al (1996).

Acceptance of the hypotheses provided some notes. It explains that gender has a significant individual attachment effects on performance. Female employees were found to be more likely to accept higher job performance. Expressiveness of female employees (O'Neil et al, 2008) might influence the support of work achievement. However Haswell et al., (1999) and Bernardi (2008) indicated that female employees' sensitivities might inhibit their effort to achieve higher outputs. Therefore, that explains why the effect of task characteristics on performance was higher for male than female employees. This applies to all dimensions of task characteristics.

Expressiveness and sensitivities of gender are important in developing jobs. Zin (2006) indicated that the responsibility for children affect job commitment among female employees. In situations where both family and work roles are equally salient, however, the difficulty of

balancing role obligations may precipitate work-family conflict. These conflicts are predicted in the form of stress, hence affect weakened performance. Therefore, the findings of this study indicate that managers must pay attention to this when designing the tasks for male and female.

Limitation and Future Research Direction

Notwithstanding these contributions, this study also has several limitations. Specific task and level of performance should be determined. Different task might influence the confidence of both male and female employees to achieve high performance. Hence exploring the task and achievement in the academic field might be different from entrepreneurial field (Meece, 1991; Pajares et al, 1994; Wigfield et al 1996; Eisenberget al, 1996; Wilson et al, 2009).

Although these findings lend strong support to self-efficacy theory, future researchers may, however, want to attempt to develop this work further, incorporating other related psychological theories such as expectancy theory. The use of different theories may enrich the accumulation of related knowledge and further understanding of empirical practices. Another possible direction for further development is to investigate the impact of task characteristics on commitment, work satisfaction and other possible outcomes.

Based on Tesluk and Jacob (1998) suggestion, further investigation on the joint moderating effects of gender and tenure is imperative. Even though, the findings supported one of various job design characteristics, it is still open for further inquiries. Different characteristics of job

design affect performance differently. It is also possible to investigate gender effects on other forms of performance. This study used role performance to represent the performance explored. Extra role performance such as organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) may enrich further understanding of total performance related to task characteristics of job design. Experimental or quasi-experimental research designs are needed to help in ruling out potential alternative explanations for these results (Morgeson, 2006). The sampling data collected was inadequate to improve on the group level analysis (HLM). Other studies can also investigate the effects of individual assessments on the job, since team assessment has become a fad.

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