

Role motivation of nonacademic university managers

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the role motivation of non-academics managers in a large provincial university in the northeast of Iran. A stratified sampling method was used to collect data from 101 managers who completed the Miners' questionnaire consist of seven role-motivation dimensions. To examine the study hypotheses, variance analysis, t-student, linear regression and kruskal-wallis tests were performed. The results revealed that the mean of managerial motivation scores were not equally distributed, but the results of simultaneous comparison showed that the motivation dimensions with equal means can be divided to four groups. Further, it was found that there is no meaningful difference between mean of managers' motivational scores, but gender makes a meaningful difference in the mean of motivation scores, as female managers showed higher motivation potency compared their male counterparts. Further, competitive activities and imposing wishes recorded the highest and lowest share of managerial role-motivation respectively.

Keywords: Role-motivation, Miner's completion sentence scale, Nonacademic university managers, Gender difference

Introduction

In the heyday of behavioral science revolution, notable psychologists such as Maslow, Herzberg and Alderfer, argued that humans are motivated to meet their various needs. Over the past few decades, motivation and ability are singled out as the main determinants of human performance (Blumberg and Pringle, 1982) and management performance (Boyatsiz, 1982). The role of motivation in effective managerial performance was also central in findings of Boyatsiz seminal research on management competency. Research and practice implications of McClelland's needs theory and Miner's role motivation theory have shown that the need for power/motivation and the motivation to perform managerial roles predict the hierarchical level of managers both cross-sectionally and longitudinally (McClelland 1975; Miner, 1997). Despite the pivotal role of motivation to manage, there is a concern among scholars and government agencies that declining motivation to manage is the real cause of poor or mediocre management performance. For example, it is argued that deficiency in motivation to manage was partly responsible for the United States' competitiveness problem in the 1980s and 1990s (Porter, 1990; Scott, 1989; Miner, et al., 1995). Miner's extensive research in managerial motivation advanced the role motivation theories on the basis of different organizational forms (1980). Miner (2007) in his managerial role-motivation theory argues that those individuals who take charge of managerial positions should have motivation related to their role; the more managerial motivation is matched with the job role, the better the job is performed. This paper attempts to outline the current state of managerial role-motivation of non-academic staff managers at one of the largest universities in Iran using

Miner's hierarchical theory of motivation and to determine the contribution each dimension of role-motivation makes in total managerial motivation.

Managerial role-motivation theory

Motivation to manage is defined as an internal force which drives certain people to seek, enjoy and perform well in managerial positions in relatively large hierarchical organizations, similar to the kind suggested by Weber in his bureaucracy model. Hierarchical organizations are characterized by high centralization, high division of labor, and high formalization. They are multi-layered and large enough to require written communication. From this perspective, managerial motivation refers to a set of motives that match the role requirements of hierarchical organizations. The effectiveness of managers depends on how well they meet the key role requirements. According to Miner (1994), there are six role requirements in hierarchical organizations:

1. Authority figures: There must be communication and interaction upward with superiors and favorable attitudes towards superiors facilitate this.
2. Competitive activities: Rewards are differentially distributed according to position and rank; thus it becomes necessary and desirable for managers to compete with peers to attain rewards. Competitive activities encompass two types of activities, namely competitive activities and competitive situations.
3. Assertive role: The managerial role is modeled on the traditional father role in which a degree of assertiveness attitudes is necessary and required.
4. Imposing wishes: Manipulation of sanction and downward supervision is essential on hierarchical structures. Thus, a desire to impose wishes and exercise power is a desirable characteristic that a manager should possess.
5. Standing out from group: Managers assume a highly distinctive and visible position differentiated them from the relative homogeneity of their subordinates, if they are to meet the role requirements.
6. Routine administrative functions: Various routine decision-making and administrative functions should be performed, if the organization is to function properly. Thus, managers should desire to perform these administrative duties in a responsible manner.

These are the parts that add up to motivation to manage. The more a person has of them, the better manager that person should be. But how can we determine how much a person has of these types of motives? Much of the research in the area of managerial job-motivation has used the Miner Sentence Completion scale form-H (MSCH-H) which was originally conceived from the observation and clinical insights of the author as applied to the Atlantic Refining Company in the late 1950s. Later, the theory was expanded to include large bureaucracy more generally. The research over the last few decades, particularly in the United States, has found substantial and consistent validity for the construct of managerial motivation and its relationship with managerial success (Miner, 1993).

Despite some criticisms of the measure (MSCH-H) (Eagly et al., 1994), it has fared relatively well on psychometric grounds. The reliability of the instrument has repeatedly examined as well with generally satisfactory results (Miner, 1993). For example, Smith and Miner (1982) in investigating top managers' motivation found that those who reach the highest echelon on business organizations have higher motivation compared to those who fail to excel in their

career. Allen and Nellen (1995) used the Miner's sentence completion scale to measure managerial motivation of black students was similar to white managers and students in business schools. Further, there was no significant difference between managerial motivation in public and private universities. Eagly et al. (1994) in examining the motivational differences between men and women managers found that the sex differences were relatively small. Powell (1993) reached the same conclusion and countered the stereotyped views of sex differences among American managers "Female managers may conform more closely than male managers to the ideal motivation profile originally developed with male managers in mind". Given the six dimensions of Miner's hierarchical role motivation framework and various research findings, three hypotheses and one question are posed in the current study:

H₁: There is a significant difference between seven dimensions of managerial role motivation.

H₂: There is a significant difference between means of managerial role motivation at different management level.

H₃: There is a significant difference between means of managerial role motivation among men and women.

Question: To what extent every of the seven dimension of role motivation explains dispersion of managerial motivation?

Research method

The study used a survey method to measure the dimensions of managerial motivation. The study population was 170 individuals who hold various staff positions at the central administration units and faculties of Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, including unit heads and their deputies, managers and administrative staff. The stratified sampling method yielded 101 as the required sample for the purpose of data collection.

Instrument

To measure managerial motivation, Miner's completion sentence scale was used which had been modified and tested previously in Iran (Mosleh-Shirazi, 1997). The Cronbach's Alpha for the current study was 0.87. This scale is based on hierarchical theory of motivation and measures seven patterns of motivation, as discussed in the previous section. It consists of 40 incomplete sentences that respondent is required to complete, using one of the six options provided for question that is closest to his or her opinion or attitudinal preferences. Given that the role titled "competitive activities" accounts for two separate variables, there are a total of 7 motivational dimensions and 5 questions for each dimension which add up to the total of 35 questions; the remaining 5 questions are not used in the analysis, as they are intended to cover up the purpose of the survey. Based on Miner's scoring instruction, two of six options reflect negative attitude, which if selected, are given negative score (-1), two other options reflect neutral attitude, which if selected, are given no point (0), and finally the remaining two options are indication of positive attitude, which if selected, are given positive score (+1). Thus, each of seven managerial motivation score ranges between +5 and -5, and when they are all added up, the total managerial score should range between +35 and -35 and this score expresses the extent that each respondent is motivated to perform the requirements of each assigned task.

Findings

The descriptive analysis showed that of 101 respondents, 64 (63.37%) were male and 37 (36.63%) were female. While, the majority in the sample (77%) had undergraduate or masters degree, 22% had diploma and post diploma degree and only 1 person (1%) had a PhD degree. Furthermore, of 101 respondents, 36 were unit head/manager, 5 were deputy head/manager and 60 were administrative staff with responsibility for certain assigned tasks. The analysis also found that the mean score for the experience in the current job, age and length of service was 9, 40 and 17 years respectively. Finally, the mean score for span of control was 5.62, meaning on average 5.62 people reported to each individual participated in the study.

Table 1 shows the score for each of 7 dimensions of managerial motivation and their total score. As seen, the mean score of managerial motivation is 6.03 in which the highest and lowest scores belonged to competitive activities and imposing wants respectively.

Table 1. Summary statistics of total managerial motivation scores

Subscales of Managerial Motivation	Summary Statistics									
	Mini	Max	Sum	Mean	Variance	Standard Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Coefficient Variation	Standard Error
Authority Figures	-4	3	57	0.56	2.67	1.63	-0.43	0.17	289.44	0.16
Competitive Activities	-4	5	182	1.80	3.62	1.90	-.60	0.59	105.59	0.19
Competitive Situations	-4	3	2	0.02	1.84	1.36	-0.02	0.23	6849.42	0.13
Assertive Role	-3	5	83	0.82	2.15	1.47	0.08	0.73	178.34	0.15
Imposing Wishes	-3	3	-26	-0.26	2.11	1.45	0.18	-0.76	-564.68	0.14
Standing Out From Group	-1	5	176	1.74	1.63	1.28	0.03	-0.26	73.33	0.13
Routine Administrative Functions	-2	4	135	1.34	1.93	1.39	-0.28	-0.43	103.82	0.14
Total	-11	18	609	6.03	22.77	4.78	-0.51	0.96	79.14	0.47

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics at three managerial levels. As seen in the table, the motivation level of vice president of administration and his assistant is higher than managerial level of other managers.

Table 2. Managerial motivation scores at different levels

Job	Sample	Mean	Standard Deviation	Confidence Interval 95%	
				Lower	Upper
Head Office/ manager	36	5.42	3.81	4.13	6.71
Vice President of Administration/ Assistant	5	9	2.65	5.72	12.29
Expert in charge	60	6.15	5.34	4.78	7.53

Similarly, the scores for managerial motivation among men and women are shown in Table 3. The results indicate a higher level of women managerial motivation compared to men.

Table 3. Means scores of motivation of male and female managers

Gender	Sample	Mean	Confidence Interval 95% for mean		Standard Deviation	Confidence Interval 95% for Standard Deviation		Min	Max
male	64	5.27	4.09	6.44	4.7	-4	18	-4	18
female	37	7.35	5.8	8.9	4.66	-11	15	-11	15

To test study hypotheses, box plot is used to locate the position of mean of each dimension. As seen, the range of changes in 7 managerial motivation dimensions differ, however their mean is close to each other, i.e. between zero to two (Figure 1).

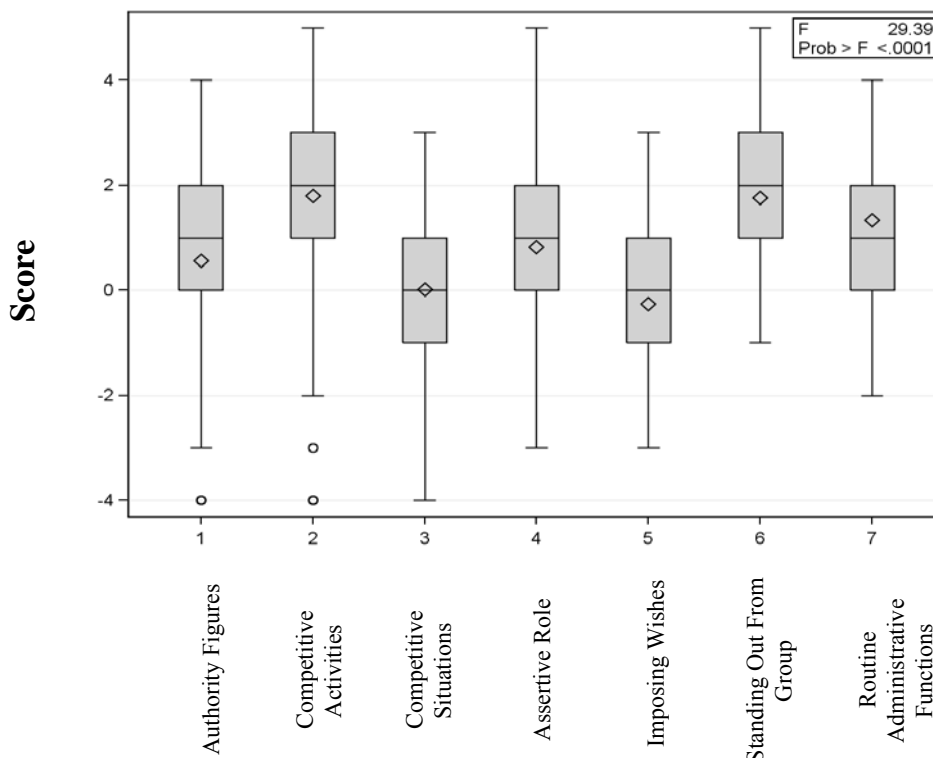


Figure 1. Box Plot for managerial motivation dimensions

Given the inhomogeneity of variables variance in Lewin test, the Kruskal–Wallis non-parametric test is performed to test unequal variance.

Table 4. Test of equal of variance of managerial motivation dimensions

Kruskal-Wallis Test	
147.26	Chi Square
6	DF
0.0001**	Probability Value

** Significant at 0.05 level

As the test result shows, mean of managerial motivation dimensions differ from each other. The question that may arise is that do these means differ for each other or the mean of several dimensions are equal?

Table 5 shows the simultaneous comparison of the means of managerial motivation dimensions. Given the test significance at 5% level, four distinct groups are emerged in which group 1 in standing out from the group, competitive activities, routine administrative functions and assertive role, group 2 in competitive activities, routine administrative functions, assertive role and authority figures, group 3 in assertive role, authority figures and competitive situations, and group 4 in authority figures competitive situations and imposing wishes have equal means.

Table 5. Grouping of managerial motivation with equal means

	Standing Out From Group	Competitive Activities	Routine Administrative Functions	Assertive Role	Authority Figures	Competitive Situations	Imposing Wishes
Mean Score	1.743	1.802	1.337	0.822	0.564	0.02	-0.257
Mean Rank*	183.257	193.98	231.139	297.416	324.277	402.089	435.366
Group 1	Group 1						
Group 2		Group 2					
Group 3				Group 3			
Group 4					Group 4		

* Ranking From small to Large

Figure 3 shows managerial motivation score at three management levels. To test whether means are equal, since the result for goodness fit test for normal distribution of managerial motivation, using Shapiro-Wilk, K-S, Smirnov and Lewin test, confirmed the homogeneity of variances, the analysis of variance is performed.

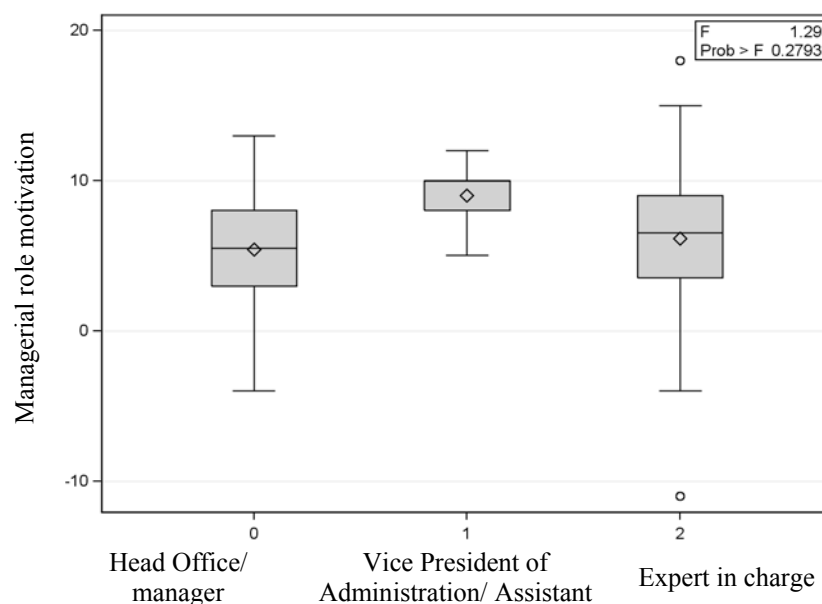


Figure 3. Box plot for managerial motivation at different management level

Table 6 shows the results of T- test for managerial motivation.

Table 6. T-test for managerial motivation mean at different management level

Source	Degree Freedom	Sum Of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	Probability Value
Model	2	58.51	29.26	1.29	0.28
Error total	98	2218.4	22.64		
	100	2276.91			

** Significant at 0.05 level

The result shows that the mean of managerial motivation at different management levels is equal at 5% significant level.

Managerial motivational by gender type

Given the aim of investigating the managerial motivation for two groups, i.e. male and female, and since the sample size for each is larger than 25, T-test is performed. Figure 2 is a merged representation of a histogram and a box plot that shows the distribution of managerial motivation differentiated by gender type. It shows that male histogram graph is closer to normal distribution, but the central sample for female managerial motivation is farther away from the normal distribution.

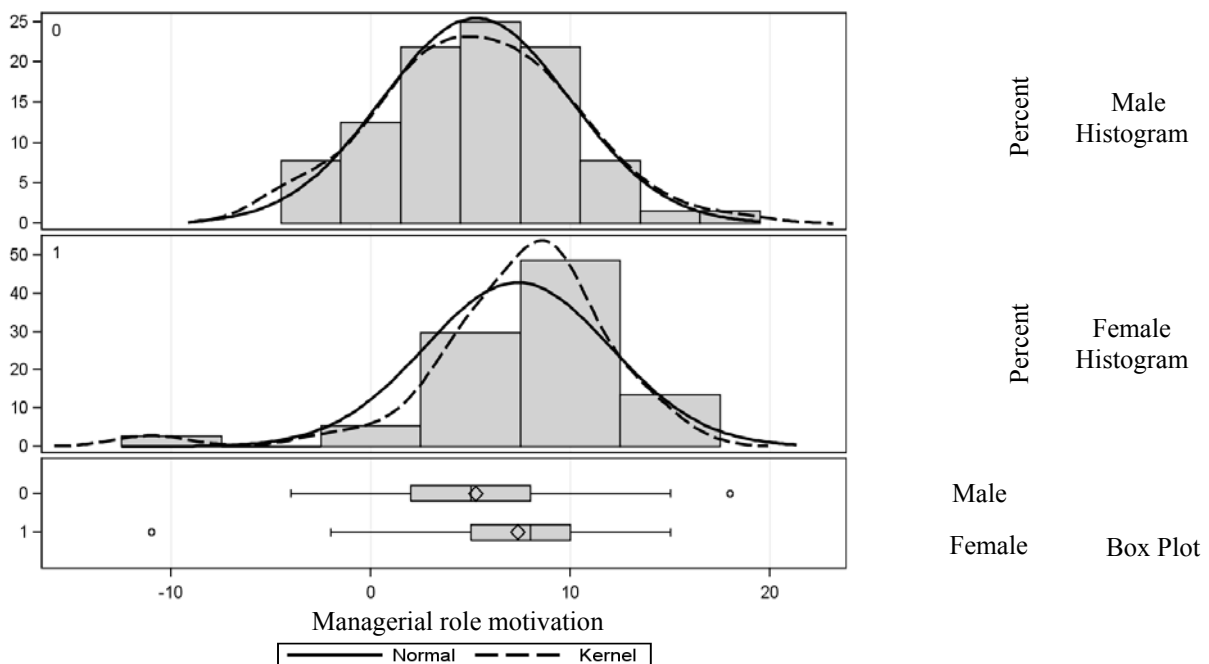


Figure 2. Box plot for managerial motivation based on gender

The T-test result confirms this finding (Table 7).

Table 7. Mean T-test by Gender

	Variance	DF	T Value	Probability Value
T- test	Equal	99	-2.15	0.0336
	Not Equal	75.927	-2.16	0.0339

Relationship between managerial motivation and its dimensions

To examine the contribution of each managerial motivation dimension in overall motivation, regression analysis is performed and the parameters of regression formulae is calculated (Table 8).

Table 8. Parameters Estimates of regression formula

#	Model	Parameters	Degrees of Freedom	Parameters Estimate	Standardized Estimate	R ²	Standard Error	T Value	Probability Value
1	Managerial role motivation= β_0 + β_1 Authority Figures	β_0	1	4.83	0	0.281	0.548	8.79	0.0001**
		β_1	1	1.64	0.53				
2	Managerial role motivation= β_0 + β_1 Competitive Activities	β_0	1	2.428	0	0.517	0.568	4.27	0.0001**
		β_1	1	1.898	0.719				
3	Managerial role motivation= β_0 + β_1 Competitive Situations	β_0	1	5.536	0	0.267	0.535	10.34	0.0001**
		β_1	1	1.945	0.517				
4	Managerial role motivation= β_0 + β_1 Assertive Role	β_0	1	4.509	0	0.2329	0.593	7.6	0.0001**
		β_1	1	1.541	0.48257				
5	Managerial role motivation= β_0 + β_1 Imposing Wishes	β_0	1	5.777	0	0.1572	0.619	9.33	0.0001**
		β_1	1	0.83	0.239				
6	Managerial role motivation= β_0 + β_1 Standing Out From Group	β_0	1	2.685	0	0.1513	1.006	2.67	0.0095**
		β_1	1	1.574	0.389				
7	Managerial role motivation= β_0 + β_1 Routine Administrative Functions	β_0	1	3.874	0	0.1332	0.78	4.97	0.0001**
		β_1	1	1.304	0.365				

**Significant at 0.05 level

Relationships between demographic variables and managerial motivation

Table 9 shows the relationship between managerial motivation and seven demographic variables, including age, span of control, length of service, occupational history, gender, education and job.

Table 9. Relationships between managerial motivation and demographical variables

Demographic variable	Managerial role motivation		
	Test/Statistics	Value	Probability Value
age	Correlation Pearson	-0.2018	0.0463**
The number of subordinates	Correlation Pearson	-0.0164	0.8721
Total years of employment	Correlation Pearson	-0.2176	0.0372**
Occupational history	Correlation Pearson	-0.0061	0.9549
gender	T-Test	-2.15	0.0336**
Education	Kruskal-Wallis Test	2.4009	0.6625
job	Kruskal-Wallis Test	4.211	0.1217

** Significant at 0.05 level

As the table shows, of seven variables, only between age, years of employment and gender are positively correlated with managerial motivation.

Discussion and conclusion

The findings reveal that the mean of nonacademic managerial motivation score in the university under study is equal to 6.03 and the range of score at 5% significant level is between 5.09 and 6.97. In other words, 95% of respondents have managerial motivation. It should be noted that Miner (1994) argues that despite the score range of ± 35 for his instrument, the overall score will not exceed ± 20 , i.e. 42% less than the maximum managerial motivation level. In the present study, the lowest and highest managerial motivation were -11 and +18 respectively, which places them in a score range suggested by Miner's estimate. Further, Miner in the same study estimates the overall managerial motivation score and acceptable standard score to be at the vicinity of 4.22 and 5.51 respectively. Considering that the mean score of managerial motivation for the present study is 6.03 and its range at 95% confidence level is 5.09 and 6.97, which compare favorably to Miner's estimated standard scores. This finding indicates that nonacademic managers in the study are more motivated compared to sample studied by Miner (1994).

The "standing out from the group" (group 1) and "imposing wishes" (group 4) variables have the highest and lowest ranking respectively, which may be due to the fact that managers in this study, despite being different from others, in practice if they impose their wishes on others without consideration, they are not able to meet their managerial role requirements in a hierarchical structure effectively.

The interesting finding of this study is that the test of equableness means shows that the difference of means of managerial levels is not meaningful, as opposed to Norman and Miner (1982) and Belaghi Inaloo's (2000) findings that states top managers are more motivated than lower level managers. One possible reason for similarity of motivation among different management levels in this study may be related to the way managers are grouped into different levels. In other word, grouping within each managerial level does not produce a significant attitudinal change across groups. Another possible reason, though less plausible, is that further research is needed to support the assumption of managerial role-motivation theory. Based on this interpretation, the findings confirm the applicability of managerial role-motivation theory in hierarchical organizations, supporting Chen et al. (1997) findings.

The findings also show that there is a significant difference between the motivational level of male and female managers which is in line with Belaghi Inaloo's (2000) study, Chen et al (1997) study concerning high managerial motivation level of female Chinese managers, and

Loden (1985) and Rosener (1990) studies in the U.S. It should be noted here despite the higher motivation score for female managers compared to their male counterparts in this study and the educational and social progress made by Iranian women over the last few decades, but the public in general still believe that one of the individual traits of effective management is its maleness. Perhaps, the reason for higher motivation level of female managers compared to that of male managers is related to the efforts made by women to change the public perception regarding lack of competency of women in playing a meaningful role in managerial, policy-making and planning arenas. Thus, it may be predicted that the trend for increasing desire by women to seek managerial positions will likely continue in the future.

The results of regression models also show that the largest contribution in explaining dispersion of managerial motivation in competitive activities followed by authority figures, competitive situations, affirmative role, standing out from the group, routine administrative functions and imposing wishes respectively. As in relation to the concept of power distance, the first five variables could be mechanisms for reducing power distance in hierarchical organizations. In Hofstede's (1980) study, Javidan and House (2001) and Dastmalchian et al. (2001), Iran is among a group of countries with medium to high power distance. Therefore, this finding also supports the conclusion made by Miner (1993), McClelland (1975) and Boyatzis (1982) that argue managerial position needs to pursue power in hierarchical organizations. Based on these supporting evidences, this finding can be taken as a step forward in promoting responsibility in managerial positions and its effect positive effects on organizational performance (Miner, et al. 1995). The small share of imposing wishes and even assertive role to a large extent can be attributed to collectivism, as a cultural characteristic. Javidan and House (2001) in their study regarding Iranian culture found that collectivism score among Iranians was higher than their individualism score. Further, they tend to be oriented to family-ethnic than institutional collectivism. This implies that managers avoid or delay imposing their wishes or exercising power on subordinates in order to reduce the adverse effects of interpersonal relationships. As the final conclusion, it maybe deduced that motivation is a driving force for excelling to managerial position. This suggests that organizations should systematically recognize and develop managerial talent in men and women, as motivated managers perceived to be an important factor for predicting high individual and organizational performance.

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