PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPACITY IMPACTS EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE AT TOURIST AREAS: A CASE STUDY IN CAN THO CITY

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Abstract

The study aims to demonstrate the influence level of psychological capacity on job performance of tourist staff in Can Tho City. Research data are collected from direct interviews with 245 employees working in tourist areas in Can Tho City. Applying the multivariate linear regression, the study shows that confidence, optimism, resilience, and hope have positive impacts on employees' job performance. In which, confidence has the most influence on the performance of tourism employees in Can Tho City.

Keywords: psychological capacity, work performance, employee, tourist areas

Jel Classification Code: J01, M21, M54

1. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Can Tho City is the center of commerce, tourism, education, training, and health of the Mekong Delta region. Recently, the strong development of the tourism industry has positively pushed the tourism infrastructure of the city. This helps attract domestic and foreign investors. Can Tho City is home to a variety of tourist accommodation, entertainment, and culinary establishments (Chau, 2016). There are more than 275 accommodation establishments, shopping centers, convention centers, and resorts in the city. Also, Can Tho City provides types of eco-tourism such as cultural tourism, leisure travel, traditional craft villages. The city becomes a transit point connecting tourists from provinces and cities in the Mekong Delta.

In recent years, the tourism industry of Can Tho city is growing rapidly. The development of tourism infrastructure and tourist areas are getting stronger (Quang, 2021), most notably My Khanh, Ong De, Lung Tram, Lung Cot Cau Tourist Area, and Community Tourism Club of Con Son. These destinations create strong impressions and images in the mind of both domestic and foreign tourists. As a result, fierce competition among tourist areas occurs. The fact shows that the job characteristics of tourism employees are complicated. They have to suffer from psychological pressure due to the changing working environment. Therefore, job-hopping in the tourism industry has become popular. This study is implemented to demonstrate the influence of psychological capacity on the performance of employees working in tourist areas in Can Tho City. The research results are an essential scientific basis for administrators in building action programs to improve the psychological capacity and job performance of tourism employees in Can Tho City.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1. Research model

The literature reviews from domestic and overseas studies show that components included in psychological capacity (confidence, optimism, hope, and resilience) have a linear relationship with job performance (Luthans & Stajkovic, 1998; Luthans et al., 2007a; Luthans, et al., 2007b; Peterson & Byron, 2008; Avey et al., 2010; Avey et al., 2011, Nghi, 2012). The study uses group discussions with nine employees working in tourist areas in Can Tho City. The results have set research hypotheses and suitable scales for the research model (figure 1). As a result, research hypotheses are as the following. H1: Confidence positively affects employees' job performance. H2: Optimism positively impacts employees' working results. H3: Resilience beneficial influences employees' job performance. H4: Hope affects employees' performance positively. Since then, the research model is as below.
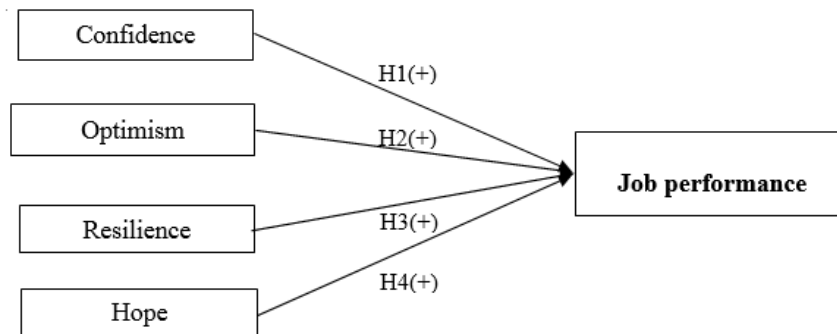

Fig 1: Proposed research model

Table 1: Interpretation of observed variables in the research model

Factor	Observed variables	Sign	Scale
Confidence (CON)	I am confident in analyzing and solving all problems.	CON1	Likert 1-5
	I am confident in reporting my job to the manager.	CON2	Likert 1-5
	I am confident in interacting with visitors and partners.	CON3	Likert 1-5
	I am confident in discussing with colleagues.	CON4	Likert 1-5
Optimism (OPT)	I believe that I can find out solutions for difficulties at work.	OPT1	Likert 1-5
	I always expect things to happen my way.	OPT2	Likert 1-5
	I always believe that good results come to me.	OPT3	Likert 1-5
Resilience (RES)	I overcome challenges easily.	RES1	Likert 1-5
	I easily get along with friends and colleagues.	RES2	Likert 1-5
	It's easy for me to keep my composure whenever I lose the balance in my mentality.	RES3	Likert 1-5
Hope (HOP)	I pursue my current goals actively.	HOP1	Likert 1-5
	I have different ways to pursue my current job goals.	HOP2	Likert 1-5
	I have many ways to resolve problems at work.	HOP3	Likert 1-5
Job Performance (JP)	I find myself work productively.	JP1	Likert 1-5
	I am always satisfied with my completed tasks.	JP2	Likert 1-5
	Superiors highly evaluate my performance.	JP3	Likert 1-5
	Colleagues consider that I am a productive staff.	JP4	Likert 1-5

2.2. Analytical data

The study applies convenient sampling to directly interview 245 employees working in tourist areas in Can Tho City. In which, female employees account for 60.3% and married employees account for 70.59%. The average age of employees is 28 years old (the lowest is 22 and the highest is 50). The average years of experience are 7 (the minimum is one year and the maximum is fifteen years). The percentage of employees working in only one tourist area reaches 75.51%. According to Hair et al. (1998), the exploratory factor analysis (EFA) requires the ratio of observations and measurement variable as 5:1, meaning that one measurement variable needs at least five observations (Trong & Ngoc, 2008). Tabachnick & Fidell (2007) argued that the suitable sample size for linear regression is $N \geq 50 + 5*m$ (m is the number of independent variables) (Green, 1991). Therefore, the sample size achieves 245 observations ensuring the reliability requirement for testing research hypotheses.

2.3. Analytical method

The exploratory factor analysis and linear regression are used to determine elements of the psychological capacity that affect job performance. The quantitative equation indicating the relationship between psychological capacity and employees' performance in tourist sites is as below.

Job performance (JP) = f(CON, OPT, HOP, RES)

In which: JP is the dependent variable; CON, OPT, HOP, and RES are independent variables.

The assessment of the influence level of psychological capacity on employees' job performance runs in three steps. (1) Testing the reliability of scales by Cronbach's alpha (Nguyen, 2011, 2014). (2) Using the EFA to group observed variables into statistically significant factors ensuring the suitability of market data (Hair et al., 2010). (3) Applying multivariate linear regression to find out the relationship between psychological capacity and job performance of employees in tourism areas.

3. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Test the reliability of scales

The reliability test of 17 observed variables included in 5 factors (confidence, optimism, hope, resilience, and job performance) proves that all scales have Cronbach's alpha values higher than 0.6 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). The corrected item-total correlation of observed variables is greater than 0.3, so no variable is excluded from the research model (Nunnally, 1978; Peterson, 1994; Slater, 1995). Therefore, all observations are satisfactory to be added to the next EFA.

Table 2: Reliability test result

Factor	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	Cronbach's alpha
Confidence			**0.803**
CON1	0.644	0.741	
CON2	0.638	0.744	
CON3	0.569	0.778	
CON4	0.621	0.752	
Optimism			**0.771**
OPT1	0.613	0.688	
OPT2	0.655	0.635	
OPT3	0.559	0.743	
Resilience			**0.781**
RES1	0.422	0.589	
RES2	0.465	0.531	
RES3	0.475	0.517	
Hope			**0.761**
HOP1	0.576	0.701	
HOP2	0.637	0.630	
HOP3	0.567	0.708	
Job Performance			**0.802**
JP1	0.666	0.726	
JP2	0.636	0.743	
JP3	0.566	0.775	
JP4	0.605	0.760	

3.2 Exploratory factor analysis (EFA)

Based on the EFA result for independent variables (confidence, optimism, hope, and resilience), coefficients are guaranteed. Significance level of the model (Sig) is less than 0.05; KMO = 0.814 (between 0 and 1); factor loading values of observed variables are all greater than 0.5; total variance explained reached 67.77% > 50%. These numbers point out that the research data is consistent (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). The analytical result form four factors, namely F1, F2, F3, F4. The observed variables of factors are the same as the initial model, so there is no change in their names. Similarly, the result of EFA for the dependent variable (job performance) is satisfactory. Sig level is less than 0.05; KMO = 0.735 (in the range of 0 to 1); factor loading of the observed variables are greater than 0.5; total variance explained is 62.94% > 50%. This finding shows that the research data is consistent (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). Hence, the result creates one factor F5. All factors are displayed in table 3.

Table 3: Factors formed from the EFA result

Sign	Observed variables	Factor
F1	4 variables: CON1, CON2, CON3, CON4	Confidence
F2	3 variables: OPT1, OPT2, OPT3	Optimism
F3	3 variables: RES1, RES2, RES3	Resilience
F4	3 variables: HOP1, HOP2, HOP3	Hope
F5	4 variables: JP1, JP2, JP3, JP4	Job Performance

3.3 Mutivariate linear regression

Based on table 4, the value of Sig. F of the model is much smaller than the significance level α = 5%, so the regression model suggested is statistically significant. Durbin-Watson = 1.920 and VIF < 4, this proves that the model does not have autocorrelation and multicollinearity. The adjusted R^2 of the model achieves 40.2%. The percentage says that factors in the model explained 40.2% of job performance.

The result indicates that independent variables are statistically significant (Sig. < 1%), that is, they have certain impacts on the employees' work results. All four elements of psychological capacity, including confidence, optimism, resilience, and hope have positive correlations with job performance. In other words, if employees are confident in themselves and optimistic about their job as well as keep their resilience and hope at work, they will get better job results. Particularly, confidence plays the most significant role and most influences on job performance in tourist areas in Can Tho City.

Table 4: Multivariate linear regression result

Factor	Standardized coefficients	Sig.	Variance inflation factor (VIF)	Hypothesis
Confidence	0.385	0.000	1.000	H1: accepted
Optimism	0.382	0.000	1.000	H2: accepted
Resilience	0.246	0.000	1.000	H3: accepted
Hope	0.242	0.000	1.000	H4: accepted
Adjusted R^2 = 0.402				
Durbin-Watson stat = 1.920				
Sig.F = 0.000				

4. CONCLUSIONS AND GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS

The study has demonstrated the influence of psychological capacity on employees' performance working in tourist cites in Can Tho City. Elements of psychological capacity have positive impacts on job results, in which confidence has the highest level of influence. Based on the findings, some governance implications are proposed to improve psychological capacity and work efficiency for tourism employees in Can Tho City.

Issue reasonable reward policy. Managers should set goals commensurate with the capabilities of each employee or working position. A good reward policy should be applied when they achieve their goals. This encourages employees to be confident and keep their hope at work. As a result, they proactively and creatively pursue their goals.

Pay attention to the psychological capacity in the recruitment process. Although professional skills and knowledge are important in recruitment, managers should focus on the applicants' psychological capacity. The psychological capacity may change and develop during the working process. Therefore, managers should consider recruiting employees with a good psychological capacity background to enhance their adaptability to the working environment.

Offer training courses to improve psychological capacity. Managers need to organize short-term training programs to help employees enhance soft skills and professional knowledge. Employees who have the necessary skills and strong expertise are more confident in interacting with visitors and solving problems.

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