

Who is Being Judged Promotable: Good actors, high performers, highly committed or birds of a feather?

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The present study investigated the impact of task performance, affective commitment, impression management tactics, and similarity to supervisor on promotability judgments in a collectivist context (i.e., Turkey). Longitudinal and multisource field-data obtained from 205 subordinates and their 35 supervisors indicated that task performance, affective commitment, and similarity to supervisor influenced supervisors' ratings of promotability. Yet no significant relationships were found between IM tactics and the promotability judgments. Furthermore, the results revealed a stronger influence of similarity to supervisor on promotion decisions in a collectivist culture.

1. Introduction

Getting ahead in organizations historically has been regarded as a critical process for both individual employees (e.g., for their career advancement) and organizations (e.g., for succession planning). Supervisory ratings of the employee's promotability or what we refer to as promotability judgments serve as a key indicator of career success and actual promotions in organizations (Ng, Eby, Sorensen, & Feldman, 2005; Van Scotter, Motowidlo, & Cross, 2000). While scholars have learned much on other human resource decisions, very little is known about the factors underlying promotional decisions (Wayne, Liden, Graf, & Ferris, 1997). Specifically, relatively little research has been devoted to the antecedents of promotability judgments (De Pater, Van Vianen, Fischer, & Van Ginkel, 2009; Hoobler, Wayne, & Lemmon, 2009; Jawahar & Ferris, 2011).

Traditionally, career scholars have focused on employee's performance evaluations as a key factor in predicting promotability judgments (e.g., Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Wormley, 1990; Wexley & Klimoski, 1984). Yet, research on promotability judgments is limited and incomplete for several reasons. First, some researchers have suggested that task performance does not accurately predict promotability and is even less crucial than other factors such as

political skills, organizational politics, social influences, contextual performance, interpersonal relations, challenging job experiences, and so forth (De Pater et al., 2009; Feldman & Klich, 1991; Ferris, Buckley, & Allen, 1992; Gentry, Gilmore, Shuffler, & Leslie, 2012; Jawahar & Ferris, 2011; Schaubroeck & Lam, 2002). How an individual employee's affective commitment, impression management (IM) tactics, and similarity to supervisor influence the supervisor's promotability judgments need to be rigorously investigated for a clearer understanding of the impact of factors such as judgments. Furthermore, there are calls for more research on the influence of performance domains on human resource decisions, including promotability ratings (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000; Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff, & Blume, 2009).

Second, past studies on promotability judgments suffer from important methodological limitations. In some studies, promotability was measured with a single item (e.g., Allen & Rush, 1998; Shore, Barksdale, & Shore, 1995; Van Scotter et al., 2000), while some others used single-source data (e.g., Jawahar & Ferris, 2011), and cross-sectional design (e.g., Gentry et al., 2012; Wang, Law, & Chen, 2008). Third, much of the research on promotability judgments was conducted in the Western context. However, there is a cross-cultural literature (e.g., Chatman, Polzer, Barsade, & Neale, 1998; Farh Tsui, Xin, &

Cheng, 1998) proffering that prevailing cultural norms (i.e., individualism–collectivism) have a significant influence on the career advancement process and the relationships between subordinate and supervisor.

This study, therefore, examines the impact of task performance, affective commitment, IM tactics, and similarity to supervisor on promotability judgments in a collectivist context (i.e., Turkey). The present study aims to make several unique contributions to the current literature on promotability judgments. First, a more rigorous investigation of the antecedents of promotability judgments, avoiding the limitations of previous research will be conducted. More specifically, a multisource (supervisors and subordinates) and time-lagged design is employed. We measured all predictor variables at Time 1. Then, 4 months later (at Time 2), the supervisors rated their subordinates' promotability.

Second, the present study extends the work of Wexley and Klimoski (1984), Greenhaus and colleagues (1990), and Jawahar and Ferris (2011) that emphasized the importance of performance evaluations and job performance in promotability decisions. The inclusion of affective commitment, IM tactics, and similarity to supervisor in this study may especially improve our understanding about antecedents of promotability decisions. Third, we aim to assess the relative influence of the proposed predictors on judgments of promotability in a collectivist context. Such an inquiry can help scholars and practitioners understand the underlying mechanism on promotability decisions in collectivistic cultures.

2. Theoretical background and hypotheses development

2.1. Promotability judgments

Promotability has been defined as 'the favorability of an employee's advancement prospects' (Greenhaus et al., 1990, p. 69) while actual performance is a function of ability and motivation (Locke, Mento, & Katcher, 1978). Based on these notions, we define promotability judgments as the supervisor's evaluations of individual's readiness and competencies to effectively perform in higher managerial roles. Past studies advocated that promotability decisions are directly influenced by factors such as education (Markham et al., 1987), challenging job experiences (De Pater et al., 2009), age (Wayne et al., 1999), succession process (Garman & Glawe, 2004), and performance ratings (London & Stumpf, 1983). Notwithstanding some of these more objective antecedents, research has either explicitly, or implicitly suggested that subjective determinants such as task performance, affective commitment, IM tactics, and similarity to supervisor might play a crucial role in supervisory ratings of promotability judgments.

2.2. Task performance and promotability judgments

Task performance refers to behaviors that are job specific, relate to core job requirements, and contribute to the technical core of the organization (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993). Bartol and Martin's (1988, 1989) dependency theory might provide a theoretical rationale for the relationships between an employee's task performance and supervisor ratings of promotability. Dependency theory builds on two fundamental assumptions about managerial decisions: (1) managers are dependent, to varying degrees, on their subordinates, and (2) managers use pay and other valued resources to manage their dependence on their subordinates (Bartol & Martin, 1988). In their research and theory, Bartol and Martin asserted that a manager depends on a subordinate due to: (1) The difficulty of replacement (the manager does not want to replace the subordinate because of his/her knowledge or skills), (2) existing organizational connections, and (3) dependency threat (if the manager does not use valued resources, the subordinate might intentionally reduce his or her job performance, or might leave the organization). We adapted Bartol and Martin's (1988) theory in an effort to explain the impact of subordinate task performance on supervisor on promotability judgments. Employee's task performance is one area on which a supervisor is heavily dependent. Based on the dependency perspective, supervisor's promotability evaluations are influenced by the degree of dependence on subordinates. Managers depend more heavily on subordinates who engage in higher levels of task performance than on subordinates who perform poorly. Thus, the more dependent a manager is on a subordinate, we expect, the more likely the manager is to give a higher promotability rating.

In earlier studies, it was found that task performance is related to promotion decisions and reward recommendations (Allen & Rush, 1998; Hui, Lam, & Law, 2000; Shore et al., 1995). Namely, using a student sample in an in-basket simulation, Kiker and Motowidlo (1999) found that task performance has main effect on supervisory reward decisions (i.e., compensation, promotion, and placement in fast-track employee development). Van Scotter et al. (2000) tested the impact of task and contextual performance on rank, medal awards, promotability ratings, and informal rewards in the military setting. They found that task performance predicts rank, informal rewards, and promotability ratings while contextual performance influences informal rewards and promotability ratings. Wang et al. (2008) found that supervisory ratings of task performance is positively related to promotability. In another study, De Pater et al. (2009) found that challenging job experiences explained incremental variance in supervisory promotability ratings over and above current job performance and job tenure. In a recent study, Jawahar and Ferris (2011) found that task performance positively

predicted promotability ratings. More recently, based on archival data from 3,680 employees in professional services firms, Bergeron, Shipp, Rosen, and Furst (2013) reported that time spent on task performance is related to faster career advancement speed. Using a dichotomous variable for promotion (promoted or not), they also observed that task performance is significantly related to a promotion.

Based on dependency theory and the studies cited above, we propose that supervisors are likely to give a higher promotability rating to subordinates who engage in higher levels of task performance.

Hypothesis 1: Task performance will be positively related to supervisor ratings of promotability.

2.3. *Affective commitment and promotability judgments*

Affective commitment is defined as 'employees' emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization' (Allen & Meyer, 1990, p. 1). A considerable number of relationships have been found between affective commitment and work outcomes such as turnover, motivation and involvement, employee health and well-being, and OCB (Gurbuz & Bekmezci, 2012; Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnysky, 2002).

Based on dependency threat in Bartol and Martin's (1988) theory, managers are most likely to allocate valuable resources to subordinates on whom they are most dependent when the likelihood of threat of dependency is high (e.g., if the subordinate intentionally considers leaving the organization and taking new job due to low emotional attachment). Bartol and Martin's (1989) found evidence that in addition to task performance, managers' promotion decision took into account the dependencies they felt on the employees for promotions. Thus, the employee who is more committed is more likely to receive a higher promotability rating than the employee who is less committed. Being emotionally committed to the organization may also influence supervisor perception about the employee's promotability. Because it has been argued that highly attached employees are regarded as vital to an organization, supervisors might find it desirable to offer promotions to the committed employees (Powell, 1993). There is, however, limited evidence suggesting that affective commitment is positively related to promotion decisions. For example, Allen, Russell, and Rush (1994) observed a positive relationship between organizational commitment and reward recommendations. Similarly, Shore et al. (1995) found that managerial perception of affective commitment is positively associated with promotability ratings. Allen and Rush (1998) reported that perceived affective commitment mediates the relationship

between OCB and overall performance evaluation. Thus, we propose that an employee's affective commitment would be related to the supervisor's promotability judgments.

Hypothesis 2: Affective commitment will be positively related to supervisor ratings of promotability.

2.4. *Impression management tactics and promotability judgments*

IM is the process whereby individuals present information about themselves to influence the image others have of them (Rosenfeld, Giacalone, & Riordan, 1995). Although the topic was originally studied by social psychologists, organizational scholars have recently begun to empirically investigate IM tactics in various organizational contexts to understand whether actor's behaviors influence observer evaluations (Bolino, Kacmar, Turnley, & Gilstrap, 2008). Although there is little agreement on exact labels for IM tactics, the most widely used conceptualization for these tactics was introduced by Jones and Pittman (1982). They developed a five-dimension taxonomy that individuals commonly use. The first, self-promotion, involves pointing out one's abilities or accomplishments so as to be viewed as competent by observers. Next is ingratiation, whereby the individual uses flattery to increase his or her likability. Jones and Pittman (1982) also suggested that the individual uses exemplification, by self-sacrificing or going above and beyond the requirements of the job in order to gain an attribution of dedication from observers. The fourth tactic is intimidation. An actor signals his/her power in order to be seen as dangerous. Finally, an individual can use supplication by advertising his/her weaknesses or shortcomings in order to appear needy to observers.

Although studies on IM tactics make an important contribution, they provide mixed evidence and suffer from scale limitations. Past research on IM tactics has generally used some variations of the scales developed by Kumar and Beyerlein (1991), Wayne and Ferris (1990), or Schriesheim and Hinkin (1990). For example, Carlson and his colleagues (2011) used a six-item scale adapted from Kumar and Beyerlein's (1991) Measure of Ingratiation Behaviors in Organizational Settings (MIBOS) and Wayne and Ferris' scale (1990) of a subordinate's deceptive IM strategies. Shaughnessy, Treadway, Breland, Williams, and Brouer (2011) used a three-item scale adapted from Schriesheim and Hinkin (1990). However, Bolino and Turnley (1999) raised serious concerns about the validity and reliability of these scales. They argued that the MIBOS scale focuses on one specific form of IM tactics (i.e., ingratiation), while Wayne and Ferris's scale has poor reliability and many of the items do not demonstrate discriminant validity. Bolino and Turnley (1999) developed a scale that

captures the full domain of impression management behaviors based on Jones and Pittman's (1982) taxonomy. Although Thacker and Wayne (1995) suggested that future research should include other IM tactics on supervisory affect, to date, no research has tested the impact of IM tactics on promotability judgment using Pittman's five-dimension taxonomy.

Gordon's (1996) meta-analysis revealed that ingratiation tactics have a positive impact on evaluations and judgments of interpersonal attraction. In similar vein, a supervisor who sees this tactic more favorable will likely rate their subordinates as more promotable. Exemplification tactics are aimed at making the employee seem more self-sacrificing, friendly, a role model, and hardworking (Wayne & Liden, 1995). It is expected that employees who use exemplification tactics are more likely to be seen as good and dedicated employees by their supervisor which, in turn will, enhance their promotability ratings.

Self-promotion tactics involve the presentation of abilities or accomplishments to impress others (Turnley & Bolino, 2001). While such tactics are designed to present oneself as more competent, they could result in negative outcomes. For example, employees who use self-promotion tactics could be regarded by supervisor as being egotistical or conceited (Cialdini & DeNicholas, 1989). Prior works revealed that the use of self-promotion tactics is inversely related to career success (Judge & Bretz, 1994) and supervisor ratings of performance (Bolino, Várela, Bande, & Turnley, 2006; Ferris, Judge, Rowland, & Fitzgibbons, 1994; Wayne & Ferris, 1990). Therefore, it is expected that subordinates who promote themselves are less likely to be seen promotable by the supervisor.

Intimidation tactics are often regarded as threatening to observers of the influence attempt (Ferris & Judge, 1991). Limited evidence suggests that the use of intimidation tactics does not place the subordinate in a favorable light (Thacker & Wayne, 1995). Similarly, it is expected that subordinates who use intimidation tactics are less likely to be seen as promotable by the supervisor.

Supplication tactics involve the advertising of weaknesses and shortcomings to appear needy. Although prior research has not explored the effect of supplication tactics on supervisory evaluations, we suggest that supplication tactics will have a negative effect on supervisory promotability judgments.

To date, only four studies have tested the influence of the IM tactics on ratings of promotability. Thacker and Wayne (1995) investigated the impact of the supervisor's perceptions of subordinate use of three IM tactics (i.e., ingratiation, reasoning, and assertiveness) as well as the subordinate's self-reports. They found that ingratiation and assertiveness are negatively related to promotability, while reasoning is positively related to promotability. These findings are based on the supervisors' assessments of IM tactics. However, they reported that only one

aspect of the subordinate's self-reports of IM tactics (i.e., ingratiation) is a significant predictor of promotability. The findings of Higgins, Judge, and Ferris (2003) meta-analysis revealed that ingratiation has a positive effect on the performance assessments and extrinsic success (i.e., salaries and promotions) while self-promotion has only a weak effect on both. Moreover, they found that assertiveness has a negative effect on performance assessments but has a positive effect on extrinsic success. In a recent study, Carlson and his colleagues (2011) found that deceptive IM is negatively related to promotability ratings. On the contrary, Shaughnessy et al. (2011) did not find a positive association between IM tactics (i.e., ingratiation and assertiveness) and promotability ratings. However, they observed that use of ingratiation is positively related to liking when women deploy political skills. Similarly, Wayne and Liden (1995) did not report significant correlations between supervisor and self-focused IM tactics and supervisor's rating of subordinate's performance.

Although the research on the effect of IM tactics on promotability judgments is scarce yielding mixed evidence, there is enough evidence that suggests that IM tactics can impact promotability judgments. Specifically, we predict:

Hypothesis 3a: The subordinate's use of ingratiation and exemplification tactics will be positively related to supervisor ratings of promotability.

Hypothesis 3b: The subordinate's use of self-promotion, intimidation, and supplication tactics will be negatively related to supervisor ratings of promotability.

2.5. Perceived similarity, cultural context, and promotability judgments

Similarity-attraction theory (Byrne, 1971) argued that individuals who share similar characteristic and attitudes are more inclined to perceive one another as similar and are likely to be attracted to each other – 'birds of a feather'. Organizational scholars have provided considerable evidence for this theory in work setting. For example, Wayne and Liden (1995) showed that the supervisor's perceptions of similarity to a subordinate is positively related to liking the subordinate and the supervisor's rating of subordinate performance. Similarly, Judge and Ferris (1993) found that demographic similarity between subordinate and supervisor is positively associated with the supervisor's liking of the subordinate.

Wayne et al. (1997) reported that perceived similarity is positively related to promotability assessments. They argued that when supervisors hold more favorable social schemas about subordinates, they are more inclined to perceive them as similar. In a simulation study, Eagleson, Waldersee, and Simmons (2000) observed that

participants playing the role of managers select candidates who have a similar leadership style to themselves for their management team. Based on these studies and similarity-attraction theory (Byrne, 1971), we predict that a supervisor who perceives a subordinate to be similar to him or her will rate this subordinate to be more promotable than a dissimilar subordinate.

Hypothesis 4: A supervisor's perceived similarity to subordinate will be positively related to his/her ratings of the subordinate's promotability.

Although much of the research on promotability judgments has been conducted in the Western context, the cross-cultural literature proffered that prevailing cultural norms (i.e., individualism–collectivism) have a significant effect on the career advancement process and relationships between subordinate and supervisor (e.g., Chatman et al., 1998; Farh et al., 1998). With these concerns in mind, it is important to extend the current literature on promotion decisions into a collectivist culture such as Turkey. There are striking differences between Turkey and the western countries (e.g., U.S. and Canada) on Hofstede's (1980) four dimensions of societal culture. Namely, Turkey tends to be high in collectivism, power distance, uncertainty, and femininity (Gurbuz & Bingol, 2007; Gurbuz & Mert, 2011; Hofstede, 1980). In addition, Turkish society can be broadly distinguished from the western societies on the basis of the vertical and horizontal dimensions of collectivism. The former emphasizes hierarchy and willing adherence to the legitimate authority of others while the latter places a higher emphasis on personal equality and competition (Singelis, Triandis, Bhawuk, & Gelfand, 1995). In vertically collectivistic cultures like Turkey, power holders are likely to prefer considerable discretion over the criteria during evaluation process. For instance, it has been argued that managers employ particularistic criteria, or personalism, in evaluating subordinate performance, and loyalty to the supervisor is key to career advancement in collectivist societies (Farh et al., 1998; Tsui & Farh, 1997). In similar vein, Triandis (1998) suggested that being directive and cooperating fully with bosses is crucial for the career advancement. Based on similarity-attraction theory, when power distance increases, managers pursue to enhance their social status by investing in relationships with subordinates who are similar to themselves (Jackson et al., 1991). In their study, Schaubroeck and Lam (2002) found that influence of supervisor–subordinate similarity on promotion decisions is stronger in more collectivistic subunit cultures than in individualistic subunit cultures. Thus, we propose that after traditional predictor of promotion decision (i.e., task performance), a supervisor's perceived similarity might be the strongest predictor of the promotability

judgments among other predictors in Turkey. Specifically, we predict;

Hypothesis 5: As they jointly influence judgments of promotability, a supervisor's perceived similarity will have the greatest effect on judgments of promotability after task performance, beyond other predictors (i.e., affective commitment, and IM tactics) in a collectivist context.

3. Method

3.1. Participants and procedures

We tested our hypotheses with multisource field data from 205 participants and their direct supervisors who work in different departments of a leading security company in Istanbul, Turkey. The company offers a range of security services, including higher education campuses, guards and patrols, security consulting, monitoring equipment, transport and logistics, healthcare facilities, and commercial property. The surveyed company maintained a stable promotion system that was mainly based on seniority and performance appraisal. Participants worked in various jobs such as director of safety and security, director of technical services, security officer, asset manager, infosec specialist, and network security analyst.

We accessed participants with the help of the third author of this study. Participants were assured that their responses would be kept confidential and participation in the study was voluntary. We asked participants not to write their names on the questionnaire. The surveys were hand delivered to the participants with a brief explanation about the general purpose of the study.

Data were collected at two points in time. At time period 1, subordinates completed survey items containing their affective commitment, and IM tactics. After completing the questionnaire, subordinates mailed them to the author. We also recruited participants' immediate supervisors to rate their subordinates' task performance. The same author visited the supervisors and gathered their subordinates' ratings. We distributed 300 surveys to subordinates; a total of 218 questionnaires were usable, resulting in a response rate of 72.6%. Four months later at time period 2, the same supervisors of the participants in time 1 were asked to assess their subordinates' promotability.

Two supervisors were not able to participate in the study in time period 2. Thus, the final sample was comprised of 205 subordinates and 35 supervisors. Of the 205 subordinates, 188 (91.7%) were male. The mean age of the subordinate participants was 33.94 years ($SD = 6.50$). With respect to the education level of the subordinates, 11 (10.7%) held a high school degree, 61 (29.8%) had a 2-year college degree, 102 (49.8%) held a

bachelor degree, and 20 (9.8%) had a master's degree. Their average tenure with the organization was 12.78 years ($SD = 6.74$) and they had worked with their supervisor for 3.68 ($SD = 2.85$) years. The supervisors reported an average tenure within their organizations of 15.66 years ($SD = 7.48$). All supervisors managed at least three subordinates.

3.2. Measures

Except where noted, all variables were measured with a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* and 5 = *strongly agree*). We averaged a composite score for each scale.

3.3. Task performance

Task performance was rated with Williams and Anderson's (1991) seven-item scale. Sample items are: 'Adequately completes assigned duties', 'Performs tasks that are expected of him/her'. Supervisors rated their subordinates' task performance in time period 1. We followed forward-backward translation procedures of Brislin (1986) to adapt the scale into the Turkish context. The Cronbach alpha estimate of the scale was .95.

3.4. Affective commitment

We assessed the participant's affective commitment with six items adapted from Meyer, Allen, and Smith's (1993) organizational commitment scale. Sample items include: 'I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization' (reverse) and 'I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career in this organization'. The scale was adapted into the Turkish context by Wasti (2003). The Cronbach alpha estimate of the scale was .93.

3.5. Impression management tactics

IM tactics were assessed with the 22-item scale developed by Bolino and Turnley (1999). The scale is composed of five subscales: self promotion, ingratiation, exemplification, intimidation, and supplication. There are four items assessing self promotion, (e.g., 'I talk proudly about my experience or education'), four items for ingratiation (e.g., 'I compliment my colleagues so they will see me as likeable'), four items for exemplification (e.g., 'I stay at work late so people will know I am hard working'), five items for intimidation (e.g., 'I let others know that I can make things difficult for them if they push me too far'), and five items for supplication (e.g., 'I pretend to know less than I do so I can avoid an unpleasant assignment'). We followed forward-backward translation procedures of Brislin (1986) to adapt the scale into the Turkish context. The Cronbach alpha estimates of these subscales ranged from .72 to .84. Given that this scale was used in previous stud-

ies, we confirmed the scale's factor structure with a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). A CFA using maximum likelihood estimation supported the five-factor structure of the scale ($\chi^2 [N = 205] = 622.15$ with 160 df, $p < .001$, CFI = .91, and RMSEA = .07)

3.6. Similarity to supervisor

We measured the supervisor's perception of similarity with three items adapted from Turban and Jones (1988) in time period 1. The scale items are: 'My subordinate and I are similar in terms of our outlook, perspective, and values', 'My subordinate and I see things in much the same way', and 'My subordinate and I are alike in a number of areas'. We followed forward-backward translation procedures of Brislin (1986) to adapt the scale into the Turkish context. The Cronbach alpha estimate of the scale was .95.

3.7. Promotability judgments

Promotability judgments were measured with seven items adapted from Kiker and Motowidlo (1999) and Thacker and Wayne (1995). At time period 2, supervisors rated their subordinates' promotability. Sample items included: 'He/she has a very high potential to move up in the organization', 'He/she is promotable', and 'If I had to select a successor for my position, it would be this subordinate'. We followed forward-backward translation procedures of Brislin (1986) to adapt the scale into the Turkish context. The Cronbach alpha estimate of the scale was .95.

4. Analytical strategy

We used CFA using covariance matrix and maximum likelihood estimation with LISREL version 8.80 software (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 2006) to verify that all variables were distinct. Particularly there are higher correlations among supervisor-related variables (see Table 1). Results of the proposed nine-factor model (affective commitment, five-factor IM tactics, task performance, similarity, and promotability) demonstrated good fit with the data, $\chi^2 (N = 205) = 1953.60$ with 953 df, $p < .001$, CFI = .94, and RMSEA = .072 (Gurbuz & Sahin, 2014; Hoyle & Panter, 1995). We compared the nine-factor model with several nested models. Alternative model comparisons demonstrated that an eight-factor model (affective commitment, five-factor IM tactics, one-factor task performance and promotability, and similarity) had significantly worse fit than the proposed the nine-factor model. Similarly, a seven-factor model (affective commitment, five-factor IM tactics, one-factor task performance, promotability, and similarity) had significantly poorer fit than the proposed nine-factor model. Thus, the fit indices of the nested models showed that all study measures have discriminant validity.

Table 1. Means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations among the variables

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Task performance	3.77	.81	(.95)								
2. Affective commitment	3.36	1.10	.133	(.93)							
3. Self-promotion	3.20	1.00	.144*	.359**	(.84)						
4. Exemplification	1.94	.98	.163*	.188**	.319**	(.78)					
5. Intimidation	1.34	.48	.067	.106	.155*	.426**	(.72)				
6. Supplication	2.46	.813	.042	.151*	.111	.270**	.138*	(.83)			
7. Ingratiation	1.36	.57	.010	.041	.028	.232**	.392**	.287**	(.84)		
8. Similarity	3.25	1.09	.835**	.047	.028	.032	.087	.037	.065	(.95)	
9. Promotability	3.69	1.10	.712**	.175*	.029	.073	-.003	.071	.054	.684**	(.95)

Note: $n = 205$. *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$. Reliability coefficients are in parentheses along the diagonal.

Table 2. Results of regression analyses

Predictors	Promotability judgments		
	β	R^2	ΔR^2
Step 1 controls		.008	.018
Hypothesis 1			
Age	.291		
Tenure	-.284		
Step 2		.512***	.501***
Task performance	.711***		
Hypothesis 2			
Step 1 controls (same as above)	—	.006	.016
Step 2		.052**	.036**
Affective commitment	.205**		
Hypothesis 4			
Step 1 controls (same as above)	—	.008	.008
Step 2		.476***	.466***
Similarity to supervisor	.690***		
Hypothesis 5			
Step 1 controls (same as above)	—	.008	.018
Step 2		.542***	.535***
Task performance	.435***		
Similarity to supervisor	.317***		
Affective commitment	.088		

Note: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$. $n = 205$. R^2 values reported are adjusted R^2 values. The betas and ΔR^2 are taken from the second steps. In all models, tolerance $> .2$ and VIF < 10 .

Since we had nested data (205 subordinates and 35 supervisors), we had planned to employ hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) for our analyses (Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002). To test the cross-level associations among variables on different levels of analysis, there had to be significant between-group variance. However, the chi-square estimates for the amount of variation in the changes in subordinates' ratings was not significant ($\chi^2 = 118.08$; $df = 204$; $p = .112$). Given our preliminary results, we used of OLS instead of HLM techniques.

5. Results

Descriptive statistics, inter correlations among the variables, and scale reliabilities are presented in Table 1. All coefficient alphas of the variables shown in Table 1 exceed the cut-off point of .70. A further examination of the results presented in Table 1 reveals that the promotability

judgments are positively and significantly related to task performance ($r = .712$, $p < .01$), affective commitment ($r = .175$, $p < .05$), and similarity to supervisor ($r = .684$, $p < .01$). However, the relationships between the promotability judgments and IM tactics are nonsignificant (*ns*). The pattern of correlations is substantially consistent with hypothesized relationships.

To test the hypothesis, we performed a series of hierarchical regressions. We statistically controlled age and organizational tenure by entering them in the first steps of each hierarchical regression equation due to their potential to account for extraneous criterion variance in past research. The results of the regression analyses are provided in Table 2. Hypothesis 1 proposed that task performance would be positively related to promotability judgments. As shown in Table 2, the addition of task performance into the equation predicting promotability judgments resulted in a significant increment in variance ($\Delta R^2 = .501$, $p < .001$). Thus, Hypothesis 1 was supported.

Hypothesis 2 stated that affective commitment would be positively related to promotability judgments. Affective commitment, entered in Step 2 of the equation, explained an additional variance in promotability judgments ($\Delta R^2 = .036$, $p < .05$). Thus, Hypothesis 2 was supported.

Hypothesis 3a and 3b proposed that IM tactics would be positively related to promotability judgments. As Pearson correlation analyses failed to show any significant associations between IM tactics and promotability judgments, we did not perform hierarchical regression again. Thus, no support was found for Hypothesis 3a and 3b.

Hypotheses 4 predicted that similarity to supervisor would be positively related to promotability judgments. As shown in Table 2, the addition of similarity to supervisor into the equation predicting promotability judgments resulted in a significant increment in variance ($\Delta R^2 = .466$, $p < .001$). Thus, Hypothesis 4 was supported.

Finally, Hypothesis 5 stated that supervisor's perceived similarity would be the strongest predictor of the promotability judgments after task performance. To test this hypothesis we added all predictor variables as a set in Step 2 of the hierarchical regression equation. They collectively explained 55% of the variance in promotability

judgments; the beta weight associated with similarity to supervisor ($\beta = .317, p < .001$) was lower than task performance ($\beta = .435, p < .001$) and commitment was non-significant indicating that similarity to supervisor was the second strongest predictor of promotability judgments. These results provide support for Hypothesis 5. Furthermore, the results revealed that affective commitment might not be a consistent predictor of promotability judgments.

6. Discussion

Although promotion decisions historically have been regarded as a critical process for both individual employees and organizations, relatively little research has been devoted to the antecedents of promotability judgments. We attempted to provide some evidence to this body of research, examining the impacts of task performance, affective commitment, IM tactics, and similarity to supervisor on promotability judgments in a collectivist context such as Turkey. We employed multisource ratings (i.e., supervisors and subordinates) and a time-lagged design to strengthen this research effort.

6.1. Implications for theory

The results indicated that task performance is a predictor of supervisors' rating of promotability judgments, revealing that employees who excel in behaviors that are job specific and related to core job requirements are viewed as more suitable for a promotion than employees who do not excel in these behaviors. Because previous promotability studies have limitations [e.g., a single item promotability judgment (Allen & Rush, 1998; Shore et al., 1995; Van Scotter et al., 2000), same source data (Jawahar & Ferris, 2011), and cross-sectional design (Gentry et al., 2012; Wang et al., 2008)], the present study provided a more robust test of the influence of task performance on promotability judgments. Moreover, our results support the application of dependency theory to the study of promotability judgments.

The results demonstrated that an employee's affective commitment is related to the supervisor's promotability judgments. It appears that employees who are emotionally committed to their organization are considered more promotable, having more managerial potential for upper levels. This finding supports Powell's (1993) view suggesting that managers offer more rewards to the committed employees. Past studies have demonstrated that organizational (Allen et al., 1994) and affective commitment (Allen and Rush, 1998) are positively related to reward recommendations, while manager perception of affective commitment is positively associated with promotability ratings. Thus, present study is the first to provide evidence that the employee's affective commitment is

positively associated with supervisor's promotability judgments, suggesting that in addition to turnover, motivation and involvement, employee health and wellbeing, and citizenship behaviors (Gurbuz, 2008, 2009; Meyer et al., 2002); affective commitment is also a predictor of promotability judgments.

Contrary to our predictions, we did not find any relationship between IM tactics and promotability judgments. This lack of significant relationships may stem from the study's design, meaning that the data were collected from different source over time. Wayne and Liden (1995) previously raised the possibility that the long-term strategic use of IM tactics might not be effective on outcome decisions. Another possible explanation for the absence of significant relationships is that the supervisor might be aware of employee's using IM tactics, ignoring their influence on promotion decisions. Although previous research on the effect of IM tactics on promotability judgment is scarce, much of the available evidence suggests that IM tactics can have an impact on promotability judgments (Carlson et al., 2011; Shaughnessy et al., 2011; Thacker and Wayne, 1995). However, these studies suffer from one or more limitations. For example, they do not capture the full domain of IM tactics based on Jones and Pittman's (1982) taxonomy. In two of these studies, a cross-sectional design was used (Carlson et al., 2011; Thacker and Wayne, 1995). In Shaughnessy et al.'s (2011) study, the IM tactics scales (i.e., assertiveness and ingratiation) had low levels of reliability. Thus, the present study provided a more rigorous test of the influence of IM tactics on promotability judgments.

Our study revealed that, as predicted, the supervisor's perceived similarity significantly predicts the promotability ratings. This result provides support of the influence of Byrne's similarity-attraction theory in organizational context. Although there is considerable evidence on the effect of perceived similarity on performance ratings in organizational setting (Judge & Ferris, 1993; Turban & Jones, 1988; Wayne & Liden, 1995), our findings extended this body of research, demonstrating that promotability judgments can also be predicted from the supervisor's perceived similarity rated 4 months beforehand.

The results further indicated that the supervisor's perceived similarity has the greatest effect on judgments of promotability after task performance in a collectivist context. This finding is consistent with Schaubroeck and Lam' (2002) study which indicated that the influence of supervisor-subordinate similarity on promotion decisions is stronger in more collectivistic subunit cultures than in individualistic subunit cultures. It has been argued that a manager's use of particularistic criteria in evaluation processes, preferring to cooperate with employees who are loyal to them in vertically collectivist cultures (Farh et al., 1998; Triandis, 1998; Tsui & Farh, 1997). In similar vein, Jackson et al. (1991) suggested that when power distance increases, managers tend to enhance their social status by investing in

relationships with subordinates who are similar to themselves. Thus, the dominant norms within the collectivist context may explain why the supervisor's perceived similarity variable has a greater effect on promotability judgments in Turkey. Because much of the research on promotability judgments has been conducted in the Western context, the present study extended this body of research, providing evidence that the influence of similarity to supervisor on promotion decisions and career advancement also prevails in collectivistic locations.

6.2. Implications for practice

Our findings pointed to some practical implications such as, to increase one's chance for a promotion employees should not only be high task performers but highly committed to their organization, and birds of the same feather (i.e., similarity to the supervisor). Since IM tactics were not found to be predictive of promotability in the present study, being a good actor may not be effective tools in influencing judgments of promotability. In addition, the substantial impact of the supervisor's perceived similarity on judgments of promotability in a collectivist context may be most problematic because it implies that the supervisor in these societies may be more prejudiced toward promoting subordinates like themselves. Using other evaluations (e.g., peer) might help organizations lessen this bias, increasing the validity of the promotion process and ensuring fair equitable decisions in such contexts.

6.3. Strengths, limitations, and future research

One of the major strengths of the study is that data were gathered from different sources and over time to test the hypotheses. Collecting the data from multiple sources with a time-lagged design not only captures predictors of promotability judgments more accurately, but also helps to overcome problems of common method bias (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Podsakoff, 2012). Whereas much of the previous work on IM tactics has utilized limited tactics and cross-sectional study design, the present study provides a rigorous test of the influence of IM tactics on promotability using a time-lagged design and a broader set of tactics based on Jones and Pittman's (1982) taxonomy.

Despite the noted contributions, the study has some weaknesses. Although data were collected from multiple sources and over time, task performance, perceived similarity, and promotability judgments assessments are based on the same source (i.e., the supervisor). Thus, the stronger relationships among these three variables imply that common method variance may still be a problem. Although the self-report of IM tactics was preferred, using additional sources (e.g., supervisor, peers, observers) in future studies to measure IM tactics may overcome this

weakness. Second, the sample was predominately male coming from different departments in a leading security company in Turkey. To increase the generalizability, future research needs to replicate our results with more diverse and gender-balanced samples.

Finally, previous research demonstrated that a supervisor's liking of subordinate and the quality of relationships between supervisor and subordinate (i.e., LMX) influences the supervisor's rating of the subordinate's performance (e.g., Bolino et al., 2006; Wang et al., 2008; Wayne & Liden, 1995). Also, earlier studies found that citizenship behaviors or contextual performance ratings are related to promotion decisions and reward recommendations (e.g., Allen & Rush, 1998; Hui et al., 2000; Jawahar & Ferris, 2011). In similar vein, how do the liking, citizenship behaviors, and LMX variables influence the promotability judgments? In addition, Turnley and Bolino (2001) argued that high self-monitoring individuals use IM tactics more effectively than low self-monitors. Thus, might self-monitoring moderate the relationship between the use of IM tactics and promotability judgments? Future research should investigate such questions.

7. Conclusion

The present study extends our knowledge of the antecedents of the promotability decisions, providing a more rigorous test, and avoiding some of the limitations of previous research. Results of our study suggest that subordinates who are high performers, highly committed to their organizations, and birds of a feather (similar to supervisor) are considered as more promotable but not the good actors (IM tactics). The study also enriched our knowledge of the strong influence of similarity to the supervisor on promotion decisions in the collectivistic cultures. Furthermore, present research responds to calls for more research on the influence of performance domains on promotability ratings (e.g., Podsakoff et al., 2009). Given the effects observed in our study and the importance of the promotions on career success (Ng et al., 2005; Van Scotter et al., 2000), both scholars and practitioners should continue to understand the underlying mechanisms of the promotion decision process.

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