Abstract—The purpose of the present research was to examine the relationship between core self evaluations (CSE) and three facets of job performance with mediating role of approach and avoidance goal orientations. Participants were 97 employees of a large medical centre who completed research questionnaires. Data analyses using structural equation modeling showed that the hypothesized model was better fit with data than independent model. Moreover CSE had a significant positive direct effect on task performance and organizational citizenship behaviors, and a significant negative direct effect on counterproductive workplace behaviors. Mediation analyses using bootstrap test revealed that CSE had no indirect effects on three facets of job performance through approach and avoidance goal orientations.

Keywords— Core self evaluations, Job performance, approach and avoidance goal orientations.

I. INTRODUCTION

Elliot and Church [1] proposed and tested a hierarchical model of approach and avoidance achievement motivation. Based on this model, motive dispositions such as personality characteristics relate to achievement relevant outcomes such as performance through mid-level motivational mechanisms such as goal choice. As Ferris [2] stated, a key distinction within this model is the distinction between approach and avoidance. This model posits that certain personality traits can be classified according to whether they represent indicators of approach or avoidance temperaments, or biologically based sensitivities to positive or negative information. Furthermore, it suggests that these temperaments influence outcomes through goal selection, [1 cited in 2]. In this model, approach temperaments relate to the adoption of approach goals, while avoidance temperaments relate to the adoption of avoidance goals. These goals fully mediate the effects of personality variables on performance outcomes [Elliot & McGregor, 1999; Elliot & Friedman, 2007; cited in 2].

Recently, Judge, Locke, and Durham [3] introduced a broad, latent, higher-order trait indicated by four well established traits in the personality literature including self-esteem, generalized self efficacy, neuroticism, and locus of control. They called this trait as core self-evaluations (CSE), and has been defined it as the fundamental evaluations individuals hold about themselves and their capabilities [3]. Research showed that CSE was correlated with organizational outcomes such as job performance and satisfaction [4, & 5]. Judge [6] with review of CSE literature stated that individuals with high levels of CSE perform better on their jobs, are more successful in their careers, are more satisfied with their jobs and lives, report lower levels of stress and conflict, cope more effectively with setbacks, and better capitalize on advantages and opportunities.

The purpose of the present study is to investigate the relationship between CSE and job performance (indicated by three facets of job performance including task performance, organizational citizenship behaviors, and counterproductive workplace behaviors) with mediating role of approach-avoidance goal orientations. In a recent research, Ferris [2] investigated the relationship between CSE and latent construct of job performance in adult employed. He found avoidance goal orientation had a negative effect on performance but approach goal orientation had not. Moreover, approach-avoidance goal orientations fully mediated CSE-performance relationship. In academic settings, Elliot and Church [1] found approach and avoidance goal orientation mediated the relationship between fear of failure and competence expectancy with academic performance.

Following hypotheses formulated for the present study.

1. Core self evaluations has a positive direct effect on task performance and organizational citizenship behaviors and negative direct effect on counterproductive workplace behaviors.

2. Approach-avoidance goal orientations will mediate the CSE-job performance relationship.

II. METHOD

A. Participants.

One hundred fifthly employees of a large medical center voluntarily participated in the study. Listwise deletion reduced the sample size to 97 who provided complete data on the measures. The average age and tenure of participants was 38.33 and 11.57 years, respectively. Fifthly seven percent of the sample was male and 80% were married. No more personal information was asked, because of making trust in participants to complete questionnaires, honestly.

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III. INSTRUMENTS

A. Core Self Evaluation Scale.

The 12-items Core Self-Evaluations Scale (CSES) was used to measure each participant’s CSE. The CSES measures a single factor that is the communality of self-esteem, locus of control, generalized self-efficacy, and emotional stability [4]. Sample items from this scale are “I am confident I get the success I deserve in life,” “Sometimes I feel worthless,” and “I determine what will happen in my life.” Hashemi Sheykshabani, Beshlideh, Taghipoure, and Neissi [7] investigated the psychometric properties of Farsi version of the scale on university employees and found that like past research conducted in western workplace settings [4 & 8] and those conducted in non-western workplace settings[9 & 10], the scale is a reliable single factor and have empirical validity by positively correlated with job satisfaction. In the present study the cronbach's alpha reliability of the scale was .65.

B. Approach and avoidance goals.

Lockwood, Jordan, and Kunda’s [11] 18-item approach/avoidance scale was used to assess approach and avoidance goals in the workplace. Participants responded to questions such as “My major goal at work right now is to avoid becoming a failure” (avoidance; α = .86) [cited in 2] and “My major goal at work right now is to achieve my workplace ambitions” (approach; α = .90). Responses were made on a 1 (Not at all true of me) to 9 (Very true of me) scale.

C. Job performance.

Recent theoretical conceptualizations of job performance suggest that job performance is a higher-order construct indicated by task, citizenship, and counterproductive behaviours (Dalal, 2005; Rotundo & Sackett, 2002; Viswesvaran & Ones, 2000; Sackett, 2002) [cited in 12]. Task performance was assessed using Williams and Anderson’s (1991) 7-item task behavior scale (α = .85). Citizenship performance was assessed using Williams and Anderson’s (1991) measure of citizenship performance. Counterproductive behavior was assessed using Aquino, Lewis, and Bradford’s (1999) deviant behavior scale which assess both counterproductive workplace behaviors towards organization and individuals [cited in2 ]. In this study cronbach’s alpha reliabilities of the scales of task performance, organizational citizenship behaviors, and counterproductive workplace behaviors were .86, .76, and .95, respectively.

IV. FINDINGS

Table I shows the means, standard deviations, and correlations among variables. As before, the zero-order correlations support the notion that CSE is associated with avoidance, with CSE being significantly negatively related to avoidance goals (r = -.46, p < .01) but unrelated to approach goals (r = .22, p > .05).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE I</th>
<th>DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND ZERO ORDER CORRELATIONS AMONG VARIABLES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>38.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>11.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>1.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSE</td>
<td>40.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approach</td>
<td>26.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoidance</td>
<td>34.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task behaviors</td>
<td>28.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCBI</td>
<td>24.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCBO</td>
<td>26.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CWBI</td>
<td>8.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CWBO</td>
<td>12.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N = 97, Gender: 1 = male and 2 = female. CSE = Core Self-evaluations. OCBI = Organizational Citizenship Behavior directed to Individual. OCBO = Organizational Citizenship Behavior directed to Organization. CWBI= Counterproductive Workplace Behaviors directed to Individuals, CWBO = Counterproductive Workplace Behaviors directed to Organization. * p < .05, ** p < .01.

We next tested the fit of hypothesized model to the data. Table II lists the fit statistics. As cited in [13], an arbitrary indicator of good fit for relative chi-square (χ2/df); comparative fit index (CFI), goodness of fit index (GFI), and incremental fit index (IFI); and root-mean-square-error of approximation (RMSEA) is less than 2, more than .90, and less than .08; respectively. The results in table 2 illustrate that initial model with high relative chi-square (5.36) and RMSEA (.21), and low CFI (.76), GFI (.86), and IFI (.77), do not fit with the data, well. Examination of modification indices permits error variances for task performance with OCB and avoidance goal orientation with approach goal orientation to covary to improve the fit indices. Table 2 shows fit statistics of the modified model and illustrate that modified model with lower relative chi-square (1.316) and RMSEA (.056), and higher CFI (.98), GFI (.96), and IFI (.99) than do initial model, fit the data, well.
TABLE II
SUMMARY OF FIT INDICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>$\chi^2$/df</th>
<th>CFI</th>
<th>GFI</th>
<th>IFI</th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial Model</td>
<td>69.73</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5.36</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modified Model</td>
<td>14.475</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1.316</td>
<td>.985</td>
<td>.965</td>
<td>.986</td>
<td>.056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence Model</td>
<td>263.006</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>9.393</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.293</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. ** p < .01. CFI = comparative fit index; GFI = goodness of fit index; IFI = incremental fit index; RMSEA = root-mean-square error of approximation [14]

The standardized path coefficients for modified model are shown in Figure 1. As shown, core self evaluations have significant direct paths to three facets of job performance including task performance ($\beta= .25$, $p< .05$), organizational citizenship behaviors ($\beta= .33$, $p< .05$), and counterproductive workplace behaviors ($\beta= -.38$, $p< .05$). There are significant negative direct path between core self-evaluations and approach goal orientation ($\beta= -.29$, $p< .05$), but no direct path between core self-evaluations and avoidance goal orientation ($\beta= .14$, $p> .05$). More direct path coefficients in the figure 1 show that approach goal orientation have no direct paths to three facets of job performance, but avoidance goal orientation have significant positive direct paths to two facets of job performance including task performance ($\beta= -.38$, $p< .05$), and OCB ($\beta= -.38$, $p< .05$). There is no significant direct path between avoidance goal orientation and CWB.

Mediational relationships were tested using bootstrap method in AMOS software. The results are presented in table III.

TABLE III
THE RESULTS OF TESTING MEDIATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS USING BOOTSTRAP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indirect effect</th>
<th>value</th>
<th>Lower bound</th>
<th>Upper bound</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CSE on TP</td>
<td>.095</td>
<td>-.009</td>
<td>.197</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSE on OCB</td>
<td>.028</td>
<td>-.063</td>
<td>.134</td>
<td>.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSE on CWB</td>
<td>-.017</td>
<td>-.098</td>
<td>.045</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: CSE (core self evaluations scale), TP (task performance)

Based on contents of table III, CSE have no significant indirect effect on task performance, OCB and CWB through goal orientations.

V. DISCUSSION

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the relationship between core self evaluations with three facets of job performance (i.e. task performance, organizational citizenship behaviors, and counterproductive workplace behaviors) with regard to mediating role of approach-avoidance goal orientations in a sample of medical center employees. To this end, we tested a hypothesized model using structural equation modeling. Results indicated that with two modifications the measurement model provided an acceptable fit to the data, with fit indices approaching or surpassing all conventional cutoff criteria, and the measurement model provided a significantly good fit to the data. Moreover, standardized path coefficients showed that consistent with expectations core self evaluations have significant direct paths to three facets of job performance including task performance,
organizational citizenship behaviors, and counterproductive workplace behaviors. These results are consistent with previous research results such as Bono and Judge (2003), Piccolo, Judge, Takahashi, Watanabe, & Locke (2005). Judge, Erez, and Bono (1998) [cited in 15] argued that the core self-evaluations should influence performance mainly through its effect on motivation. According to these authors, several theories of motivation might explain the effect of core self-evaluations on performance. Erez and Judge (2001) cited in [15] conducted two studies to investigate the degree to which motivation mediated the relation between core self-evaluations and performance. In a laboratory study, Erez and Judge found that the core self-evaluations was positively related to self-reported task motivation, an objective measure of task persistence, and task performance. In a second study, a field study of insurance agents, Erez and Judge found that the core self evaluations was positively related to sales goal level, goal commitment, and both objective (sales volume) and supervisory ratings of job performance. In both studies, Erez and Judge found that motivation mediated about half of the relation between core self-evaluations and performance. Thus, it appears that core self-evaluations is a motivational trait and this explains much of its effect on job performance.

Other findings showed that contrary with hypotheses, approach and avoidance goal orientations did not mediate the CSE-job performance relationship. Considerable research showed that approach and avoidance goals perform differently in individualistic cultures versus collectivistic cultures [see 16, 17, 18]. Many researchers have tried to explain how culture affects individuals attitudes and beliefs, and in turn how they may affect individual and group behaviors (Markus, and Kitayama, 1991; Triandis and Gelfand, 1998; Gudykunst, Matsumoto, Ting-Toomey, Nishida, Kim, and Heyman, 1996) [cited in 19]. Markus and Kitayama [20] suggested that people in collectivistic societies are more likely to take their relatedness with others into account when describing them; they have an interdependent construal of self. On the other hand, people in individualistic cultures are more likely to emphasize their uniqueness, rather than their connectedness with others [20, 21]. Individualism and collectivism as cultural dimensions have been shown to be related to approach and avoidance goal orientations [see 17]. Like other researchers [17] I believe that performance approach and avoid goal orientations perform differently in Iranian population (as a collectivistic culture) compare to individualistic cultures [see 18]. It is suggested that future research investigate the CSE-job performance relationship according to different culture and context.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT
I wish to thank all employees participated in the study and completed research questionnaires.

REFERENCES