Effects of Organizational Politics on Job Performance: Mediating Role of Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Commitment

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Abstract

Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Commitment. A detailed review of the literature was conducted in order to find out the factors that influence Job Performance. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect the data from the respondents. This study was conducted in the banking sector of Pakistan. Total of 370 questionnaires was distributed among different public and private sector banks of Lahore, Pakistan. The overall turnover of 90% was attained i.e. 333 useable responses were received. SPSS and Amos were used for the analysis of the model. This study found that organizational politics is significantly related to job performance. Emotional intelligence mediates the relationship between organizational
politics and job performance whereas, organizational commitment does not mediate the relationship between organizational politics and job performance. This study will provide guidance to banks that how they can improve their employee’s performance which directly affect the performance of their organization. Moreover, it is an obligation to the bankers to examine the emotional intelligence of the employees before their recruitment, it will directly help the process of hiring, and the right person for the right job is important for every organization specifically in case of high EI. This study contributes to the literature by adding a mediational effect of organizational commitment on organizational politics and job performance. And also examine the relationship of emotional intelligence between organizational politics and job performance.

**Keywords:** Organizational commitment, Emotional Intelligence, Job performance, Organizational politics

1. **Introduction**

In the past few years it has been observed that Organizational Politics is a crucial factor for both the organization and the employees working in the organization. Organizational Politics can be defined as “Strategically Designed behaviors that maximize self-interest”. (Cropanzano, Howes, & Grandey, 1997). Most employees agree that organizational politics exists in their respective organizations. Generally, it is seen that those employees involve in organizational politics who want to protect their own interests (Parsad, 1993). Organizational Politics can have both the positive and negative impact in an organization but usually it is considered to have a negative influence because it disrupts both the efficiency and effectiveness of an origination (Kacmar, Bozeman, Carlson, & Anthony, 1999). “Organizational Politics consumes time, limits data sharing, and creates hindrances in communication (Eisenhardt, 1998). In addition to that employees can face detrimental effects due to organizational politics. A working environment that is filled with organizational politics is unpleasant to work in, not favorable for promoting positive job attitudes and is prone to have high employee turnover, high job stress, low job satisfaction and low job performance”. Organizational politics creates moral issues, uneven relationships and mental strain (Chang, Rosen, & Levy, 2009). Organizational Politics gives rise to intense emotions among employees and this phenomenon has not been studied in detail. Keeping in view which is studied in detail. Emotional Intelligence greatly affects the job performance of employees. Not many researches have been conducted to study the relation between organizational politics and emotional intelligence. It has been generally seen that employee’s emotional intelligence plays a significant role in dealing with the organizational politics which consequently affects the job performance of employees.

Organizational commitment of employees is another key factor that is affected by organizational politics which in return effects on the job performance of the employees. Organizational commitment is a matter of concern for both the employer and the employee to improve the work environment. Organizational commitment shows how dedicated is an employee towards the organization. Organizational commitment has attracted a vast number of researchers because it greatly influences the employee’s job performance (Robbins, 2005). A lot of researches have been conducted to study the organizational politics and its implications on job performance but there exists a literary gap in understanding the mediating
role of emotional intelligence and organizational commitment between organizational politics and job performance. Knowledge from this study can help managers in understanding and managing the political behaviors of employees which can lead to improved job performances. In sum, the purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between organizational politics and job performance keeping in view the mediating role of job commitment and emotional intelligence of employees.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Organizational Politics

Organizational politics refers to the actions of employees in an organization to acquire and exercise power to protect self-interests (Bozeman, Perrewe, Kacmar, Hochwarter, & Brymer, 1996). Organizational Politics is also defined as “intentional acts of influence, actions, even tactics on influencing decision making” (Fleming & Spicer, 2008). In this way, Organizational politics can be referred to as activities of people who have an expectation to protect their own self-interest without considering the value of well-being of fellow employees or even the organizations they are working in (Mintzberg, 1985). Some researchers have portrayed OP negatively while others consider it neither completely legal or illegal action. Some researchers also term organizational politics as an enemy of the organization (Allen & Meyer, 1979). Researchers have also worked upon the consequences of organizational politics on job-related outcomes like job satisfaction and job performance (Kacmar & Ferris, 1991). The perception of organizational politics is subjective and varies according to individual behavior, time etc. However, the actual organizational politics can be observed objectively (Kacmar & Ferris, 1991). Hence it can be said that organizational politics is self-centered and closely related to the emotions of employees. It has been found out that high organizational politics leads to low performance by the employees in an organization and affects the commitment of the employees with an organization. Researchers have concluded that the organizations where OP is lower, the moral of the employees was higher (Rahman, Hussain, & Haque, 2011). Ferris, Russ, and Fandt (1989) introduced a model which is considered as a base of modern work being done on perceptions of organizational politics. The positive and negative relations of this model with outcomes like job satisfaction, performance, turnover etc. were validated by many researchers (Cropanzano, Howes, & Grandey, 1997) Kacmar and Ferris (1991) further worked on this model and came up with an idea that OP is negatively related to job performance.

2.2 Emotional Intelligence

Job performance of employees is strongly influenced by the emotional intelligence of employees. Emotional Intelligence “is defined as the subgroup of social intelligence. According to Mayer (1990), EI can be defined as a set of activities and abilities of an individual to match emotions and use of information to guide actions. They characterized it as a type of social response that incorporates recognition, examination, and development of particular practices for emotional content. The people who have developed emotional intelligence, all in all, are more mindful of their own emotions and can control and express it. It has been observed that individuals with high emotional intelligence are all the more eager to have positive associations with others, however less ready to have a negative connection with their companions (Lomas, Stough, Hansen, & Downey, 2012). Self-confidence,
self-control, emotional awareness and empathy are considered to be the dimensions of emotional intelligence (Quebbeman & Rozell, 2002). Mayer and Salovey (1997), recommended four components for emotional intelligence which incorporate learning, understanding, change, and general knowledge (Scott-Ladd & Chan, 2004). They characterized the term as social abilities including understanding and proper articulation of feelings, feelings coordinated with future psychological procedures, comprehension of feelings and their ideas for various circumstances and emotions managing” (Lyons & Schneider, 2005).

There are two groups with different opinions. One group presented an ability model and says that argued that emotional intelligence is of theoretical nature and it is made up of a combination of skills and abilities (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Another group presented a mixed model and presented that along with the combination of Skills and activities it also involves motivational and personality aspects of employees (Goleman, 1995). This study considers the ability-based model of EI to understand the mediating role of EI between OP and JP. This model was first proposed by Mayer and Salovey (1997) and was further investigated by Law and Wong (2004), who defined EI as a combination of skills and abilities.

2.3 Job Performance

Job Performance refers to the attitudes and activities of employees that contribute to the attainment of the organizational goals either directly or indirectly (Viswesvaran & Ones, 2000). Two parts of Job performance are task performance and contextual performance (Meade & Johnson, 2010). If a person feels that there is a difference in his input and output level and others input and output level, then his JP is affected because he feels inequality (Adam, 1965). This is what politics is and it is negatively associated with JP (Samad, 2011) and EI is positively associated with JP (Chughtai & Lateef, 2015).

OP gives rise to emotions like frustration and anger among employees these days who experience or practice it (Vigoda & Meisler, 2010). EI gives rise to negative-positive emotions Mayer and Salovey (1997), there is still a room to understand what type of relationship exists between OP and EI (Vigoda & Meisler, 2010). So, this study proposed a model in which EI mediates between OP and JP.

2.4 Organizational Commitment

Organizational Commitment of employees is “defined as perception and beliefs in which a person acknowledges the vision, mission, qualities, goals, and objectives of the organization and willingly work to accomplish every task efficiently and effectively (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 2001). Employees who are committed to their respective organizations do the effort to achieve the organization’s objectives and goals (Guest, 2007). In the literature of USA and UK (Gould-Williams, 2004) founded that there exists a significant relationship between organizational commitment and job performance Vigoda-Gadot (2007) established the connection between organizational citizenship behavior and job performance directly and indirectly in which organizational politics affected as a mediator. Al-Alawi, Al-Marzooqi, & Mohammed (2007) have proposed that organizational structure, communication, reward system, information syste, and trust, were related positively with sharing the knowledge in the organization. So, there is found to have a significant negative relationship between
organizational politics with organizational commitment” (Bozeman, Perrewe, Kacmar, Hochwarter, & Brymer, 1996).

3. Research Model and Hypothesis Development

There are many controversies about the relationship between OP and EI. It is seen that OP is negatively related to EI because of certain reasons. First of all, OP is related positively with frustration, stress, and anger (Vigoda & Meisler, 2010) and EI is negatively related to stress (Rahim, 2010). Second of all, people who are well aware of how to deal with emotions arising from negative actions by considering past events and actions (Vigoda & Meisler, 2010). Hence, it can be said that OP has a negative relation with EI.

H1: Organizational Politics is negatively related to Emotional Intelligence

It is also proposed that OP is negatively related to JP. The reason behind this is that authority, control and politics have some significant effect on every member of the organization (Goodman and Friedman, 1971). According to the equity theory of (Adams, 1965) if a person feels that there is a difference in his input and output level and others input and output level, then his JP is affected because he feels inequality (Adam, 1965). This is what politics is and it is negatively associated with JP (Samad, 2011).

H2: Organizational Politics is negatively related to Job Performance

It has been also proposed that EI and JP have a positive association. The reason behind this supposition is literature that states that EI leads towards enhanced productivity levels, positive work attitude, higher social ability and stable behavior (O’Boyle et al., 2011). Hence it can be said that EI is positively related to JP.

H3: Emotional Intelligence is positively related to Job performance

In the past, many researchers explored the effect of OP and JP (Mesiler & Vigoda, 2014) but only a few researchers have studied the mediating variables between OP and JP like work engagement (Karatepe, 2013) and perception of social exchange (Bodla, Afza, & Danish, 2014). As stated earlier that in most of the studies POP does not moderate between EI and JP, these researchers also proposed that EI can mediate between OP and JP as well (Poon, 2004,
Chang et al., 2009; Samad, 2011a). Based on these researches it can suppose that:

H4: Emotional Intelligence mediates connection between Organizational Politics and Job Performance

Hobfoll (1989) came up with a Conservation of Resources theory that describes “the resource interaction process between individual and social environment. The theory states that individuals with more resources are less afraid of losing the resources and their ability to obtain more resources is higher and vice versa. According to this theory, if organizational politics is perceived by the people in an organization, then in order to deal with their anxiety and nerves they need to spend time that results in a loss of their psychological resources. Organizational commitment is as one of these psychological resources”. Homans (1974) came up with Social Exchange theory and suggested that of the relationship among people is social trade, that includes the trade of material and immaterial. According to this theory, employees work engagement would diminish with decreasing organizational commitment. For instance, when an employee thinks of a promising idea, he will share his thought with his supervisor and colleagues. In any case, if the climate is loaded up with politics and concealment, lower level of turnover intention is brought by an elevated level of organizational commitment (Kang, Gatling, & Kim, 2015). Till date, many types of research have proved that there is a positive relationship between organizational commitment and job performance (Demerouti, Bakker, de Jonge, Janssen, & Schaufeli, 2001). In view of the above-mentioned analysis

H5: The organizational commitment is absolutely connected with Job performance

In research, a mediating role of organizational commitment is used to study the employee’s workplace behavior. It has been found that a mediating role is being played by organizational commitment between employee’s organization culture fit and job performance (Chang, Zheng, Zhu, & Yan, 2010).

H6: “Organizational commitment play a mediating role between organizational politics and job performance”.

Becker (1960) put forward the organizational commitment theory that economic benefit on both sides is the basis of organizational commitment. He came up with the thought that “working in the same organization for a long time and keeping in view the contributions that they made to an organization, people, for the most part, were not willing to leave their organization. They feared to lose what they get from the organization now, which made them stay longer in the organization (Becker, 1960). Meyer and Allen (1979) characterized organizational commitment as an emotional connection that consists of employees’ reliance on the organization and obligation to it. A strong negative connection has been found out between organizational politics and job satisfaction and between organizational politics and organizational commitment (Miller, Rutherford, & Kolodinsky, 2008). The employee’s dependence on organization and obligation to an organization are likely to be wrecked in an environment where employees perceive organizational politics. Hence, organizational commitment is destroyed

By organizational politics. Based on the analysis above, we put forward the following hypothesis.
H7: organizational politics decreases the commitment level of employees.

4. Methodology

This study was conducted in the banking sector of Pakistan. According to State Bank of Pakistan, 22 banks are operating across Pakistan with 9000 branches (http://www.sbp.org.pk/, n.d.) And almost 81000 employees across the country (Islam, 2014)”. The total was collected using questionnaire-based survey method. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. The first part covered demographics like age, gender, qualification, marital status. The second part covered the variables of the study i.e. Organizational Politics, Emotional Intelligence, Organizational Commitment, and Job Performance. Total of 370 questionnaires were distributed among different public and private sector banks of Lahore, Pakistan. The overall turnover of 90% was attained i.e. 333 useable responses were received.

4.1 Measurement

All the responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale (1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree).

4.2 Organizational Politics

In this study Kacmar and Ferris (1991) nine-item Perception of Politics Scale was used to measure the organizational politics variable. The reliability of this scale reported by Kacmar and Ferris is 0.87. A sample of this scale is “Favoritism rather than merit determines who gets ahead around here”. The reliability of this scale in this study is found to be 0.70.

4.3 Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence is measured using the 14 items scale of Wong and Law (Law & Wong, 2004). A sample of this scale is “I am able to control my temper so that I can handle difficulties rationally”. The reliability of this scale in this study is found to be 0.90.

4.4 Organizational Commitment

Organizational Commitment is measured 8 item scale that was extracted from Allen & Meyer (1990) scale to measure organizational commitment. A sample of this scale is “I really feel as if this organization’s problems are my own”. The reliability of this scale in this study is found to be 0.80.

4.5 Job Performance

Job Performance is measured using six-item scale of Tseng and Huang (Tseng & Huang, 2011). A sample of this scale is “Dealing with other colleagues in this organization increases my work efficiency”. The reliability of this scale in this study is found to be 0.87.
5. Results

5.1 Preliminary Analysis

Demographic of the respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographical Characteristics</th>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>55.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>44.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>65.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40 &amp; above</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>90.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Out of total sample, 186 were men (55.9 percent), the majority of the respondents were from the age slab of 30-34 years (65.2 percent). Total of 90.7 percent were married respondents while 9.3 percent were single. The questionnaire was directly handed over to the respondents after explaining to them the purpose of the research and usefulness of their response. The data in this study were examined for outliers, normality, missing values, and multicollinearity because each of these factors affects the results (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). There were no missing values in the data as the researcher personally administered the responses while conducting the survey. The data is found to be normal keeping in view the values of skewness (±1) and kurtosis (±3) (Byrne, 2010). There was no issue of multicollinearity as the values of correlations among variables were above 0.90 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

Correlation Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>St. Deviation</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Commitment</td>
<td>3.2466</td>
<td>1.15185</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Performance</td>
<td>3.8053</td>
<td>.83427</td>
<td>.174**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Politics</td>
<td>3.1922</td>
<td>.85672</td>
<td>.322**</td>
<td>.118*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Intelligence</td>
<td>3.6913</td>
<td>.74868</td>
<td>.368**</td>
<td>.065</td>
<td>.453**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The above table showed that the mean value of the variables is ranging from 3.1 to 3.8. And the value of standard deviation is ranging from .74 to 1.1. Correlation table shows relationships among variables. These relationships can be strong, moderate and weak. Organizational commitment is weakly and significantly related to job performance with the value of r= .174 at the level of 0.01. Organizational commitment is moderately and significantly related to organizational politics with the value of r= .322 at the level of 0.01. Organizational commitment is moderately and significantly related to emotional intelligence with the value of r= .368 at the level of 0.01. Job performance is weakly and significantly
related to organizational politics with the value of $r = .118$ at the level of 0.05. But, organizational politics is positively and strongly related to emotional intelligence with the value of $r = .453$ at the level of 0.01.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis:

Figure 1. Measurement model
Fitness summary:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Model Values</th>
<th>Ideal Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CMIN/DF</td>
<td>1.767</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFI</td>
<td>.958</td>
<td>&gt;.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GFI</td>
<td>.891</td>
<td>&gt;.85 OR &gt;.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGFI</td>
<td>.868</td>
<td>&gt;.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMSEA</td>
<td>.048</td>
<td>&lt;0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCLOSE</td>
<td>.686</td>
<td>CLOSER TO 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMR</td>
<td>.047</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural Equation Model:

![Structural Equation Model Diagram](image)

Figure 2. Structural equation model

Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>emotional &lt;--- politics</td>
<td>.210</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>commitment &lt;--- politics</td>
<td>.274</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>performance &lt;--- politics</td>
<td>.265</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>performance &lt;--- commitment</td>
<td>-.020</td>
<td>.522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>performance &lt;--- emotional</td>
<td>.625</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2 Bootstrapping Strategy

For Mediational analysis, bootstrapping technique is used. It helps to examine the indirect effect and both the direct effect of the study which is as follows:
Mediation Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paths</th>
<th>Direct Beta without Mediation</th>
<th>Beta with Mediation</th>
<th>Indirect Beta</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organizational politics → emotional intelligence → job performance</td>
<td>.260***</td>
<td>.290***</td>
<td>.146***</td>
<td>Partial Mediation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational politics → organizational commitment → job performance</td>
<td>.393***</td>
<td>.439***</td>
<td>-.003(Ns)</td>
<td>No Mediation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Limitations

This study is not free from limitations. First of all, data was collected from a limited number of banks in Lahore only. In the future, data from banks in other cities can also be collected. This is a cross-sectional study however future researchers are encouraged to conduct a longitudinal study to build up a better understanding of this topic. Also, a bias in the study might be observed due to the usage of the self-reporting questionnaire. In the future, Variables like qualification and position can also be added as mediators to study the effect of organizational politics on job performance.

7. Future Directions

In addition to the gaps outlined above, “the current study outlines numerous areas for future research. For one, the current study should persuade Human Resources professionals on considering EI in their employee selection and hiring. Collecting such data longitudinally and linking it with more objective measures of Job performance could provide good data that further reveals the model predicting Job performance. Moreover, researchers interested in carrying out research on the EI-JP relationship might examine possible moderating factors that may magnify or downplay the role of EI and JS in influencing JP. The degree to which EI affects different work outcomes may vary significantly with factors such as degree or type of emotional labor involved as well as other job-related and personal characteristics. Third, future research could look into the indirect effects of EI on work-related outcomes and focus on studying the mediating and moderating role of EI. Finally, further studies could focus on exploring the effects of EI training provided to employees on different work outcomes in organizations”.

References


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