

Perceived Organizational Politics, Organizational Citizenship Behavior and Job Attitudes Among University Teachers

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Present study was carried out to examine the impact of perceived organizational politics (POP) on organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), affective commitment (AC), and job involvement (JI). A convenient sample of teachers ($N = 494$) of different public sector universities of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces of Pakistan was included in this study. Correlational survey research design was undertaken in order to accomplish the current study. Organizational Citizenship Behavior Scale (Lee & Allen, 2002), Organizational Commitment Scale (Allen & Meyer, 1990), Organizational Politics Scale (Kacmar & Carlson, 1997), and Job Involvement Scale (Kanungo, 1982) were used for assessment. Appropriate analyses were carried out to analyze data through SPSS-21 version. Multiple regression analysis revealed that POP and its constructs that included general political behavior (GPB), go-along-to-get-ahead (GATGA), and pay-and-promotions-policies (PPP) not only predicted OCB negatively but also found to be the significant negative predictors of AC and JI. Implications of this study and suggestions for future empirical exploration of the constructs are discussed.

Keywords. Perceived organizational politics, OCB, affective commitment, job involvement, University teachers

Universities have always been conceived as vital units contributing in various sectors of development and growth, through intellectual input. Teaching faculty is most important force assumed to contribute in span of knowledge that is substantial for the improvement of society and progress of the state. There are certain organizational and individual issues that need to be addressed to understand in order to facilitate the behavior and attitudes of teaching faculty.

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Perceived organizational politics (POP) is one of those most important workplace phenomena that directly or indirectly affects the behavior and attitudes of a university teaching and non-teaching employee. Organizational researchers have been interested in exploring its individual as well as interactive effects on employees in various settings. The current study is an endeavor to explore the individual impact of the organizational politics embedded on work outcomes including organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), affective commitment (AC), and job involvement (JI) among university lecturers how they respond while perceiving high organizational politics.

Perceived Organizational Politics

Organizational politics has been defined as those acts of influence by employees, which are aimed at enhancing or protecting the interests of oneself or of the group (Allen, Madison, Porter, Renwick, & Mayes, 1979). Ferris, Russ, and Fandt (1989) define organizational politics as the influence process which is strategically designed in order to maximize self-interest. These self-interests might be short-term or long-term and these might be consistent or contrary to the interests of others in the organizations. Other definitions indicate organizational politics as power taking action by using various techniques (Buchanan, 2007) and indulging in activities of influencing which are aimed at increasing the interests of oneself or those of the organization (Rosen, Harris, & Kacmar, 2009).

When organizational politics is viewed from the side of employees, it often takes a negative form and has been found to be a negative variable at workplace and is termed as perceived organizational politics (POP). It has been argued that organizational politics is not a reality objective enough to be perceived as alike by every individual in the organization; rather, it is differently perceived by everyone. Therefore, it is better to entitle it as “perceived organizational politics” rather than “organizational politics” (Ferris et al., 1989).

The most welcomed classification scheme among the researchers and theorists of perceived organizational politics is the three factor classification scheme proposed researchers (Fedor, Ferris, Harrell-Cook, & Russ, 1998; Kacmar & Ferris, 1991). These factors include pay and promotion policies (PPP), go-along-to-get-ahead (GATGA), and general political behavior (GPB).

PPP suggests whether the pay raises and promotions of the employees are done on the bases of merit or some other, political way

determines the reward structure of the organization. For instance, pay raises, or other benefits may be done on the bases of favoritism or some other political action (Kacmar & Ferris, 1991; Rosen, 2006). GATGA involves those acts of politics where individual remains quiet and takes no action in order to save valued outcomes and that non-threatening silent people are rewarded because they do not take action against others and do not interfere with the acts of powerful others (Kacmar & Ferris, 1991), whereas GPB involves general acts of politics e.g., blaming someone else at work for the mistakes, taking credit of some fellow and going into someone's ally group who is powerful in the organization (Kacmar & Carlson, 1997; Kacmar & Ferris, 1991; Rosen et al., 2009). These acts are the result of uncertainty where no actual rules are available and are often manifested when the actor wants to approach scarce resources.

Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Organizational citizenship behavior is a cluster of discretionary, organization-facilitating behaviors which add to psychological and social context of performance but do not bring reward for the worker under formal reward system (Alizadeh, Darvishi, Nazari, & Emami, 2012; Organ, 1988, 1997; Organ, Podsakoff, & MacKenzie, 2006). These are the behaviors which add to the development of the organization but are not included in the formal job description. Organ (1988) first introduced this concept when he revisited the traditional concept of job performance. He noted that along with quantitative aspects of work, job performance was something more than the call of duty. It included some qualitative aspects, which he termed organizational citizenship behavior, which add to the social and psychological context of the work.

Organ (1988) proposed well recognized categorization scheme of OCB which divides OCB into five dimensions. Organ's five dimensional scheme (Mehboob & Bhutto, 2012) is the most widely welcomed categorization scheme among the researchers. It divides OCB into five dimensions including courtesy, sportsmanship, civic virtue, conscientiousness and altruism. Zarea (2012) found that higher levels of OCB result in increased level of social capital which is the ability to solve collective problems.

Affective Commitment

Organizational commitment, an attitudinal and behavioral organizational construct, has been a focus of interest among organizational researchers. Researchers have defined it as a psychological

state and a mindset that connects the employees to the organization and leads them to follow the course of particular actions, and thus reduces their turnover intention (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). Organizational commitment has drained the attention of many researchers because it leads significantly to an increased level of organizational performance (Suliman & Iles, 2000). It has been identified that organizational commitment has both the cognitive and affective aspects which include the behavioral elements, cognitive basics of the commitment, and the emotions of staying loyal to the organization (Meyer, Becker, & Dick, 2006).

Wasti (2002) argues that the three component model of organizational commitment has gained popularity among the literature available on the types of organizational commitment. The model was proposed by Meyer and Allen (1997) who stated that employee's commitment to the organization reflects an obligation, a need and a desire to maintain the relationship therefore, commitment can be divided into three different but related types including affective, normative and continuance commitment.

Normative commitment is the part of commitment which is manifested in a perceived moral obligation to stay in the organization; continuance commitment manifests that employees want to stay committed to the organization because they compare the perceived social and economical costs and benefits of staying in the organization and leaving the organization, and affective commitment (AC) is the most strongly-correlated part of organizational commitment with many positive work outcomes, is the affective part of organizational commitment (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002). Affective commitment is the affective part of the organizational commitment which is manifested by the employee's strong identification to, involvement in, and feeling of attachment to the organization (Huey & Kamarul, 2009). The employees affectively committed to the organization, identify themselves with the organization in such a way that they get involved in the goal-seeking process of the organization and strive for the values and goals of the organization (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979). It is cordial for the organization as the employee, when having such kind of commitment, intend not quit an organization because the employee wants to stay in the organization. AC specifically has been found decreasing the withdrawal behaviors including absenteeism, turnover intention and actual turnover (Alexandrov, Babakus, & Yavas, 2007; Paré & Tremblay, 2007).

Job Involvement

The extent to which an individual identifies psychologically with his job, and incorporates the importance of the job in his self-image and self-concept is termed as job involvement (Higgins, Duxbury, & Irving, 1992; Shaffer, Joplin, & Hsu, 2011). It is in fact, how an employee describes his relationship with the job and the work environment and how his job is intermingled with his life. It is manifested when the employees internalize their work values and make it important to themselves (Ramsey, Lassk, & Marshall, 1995). It is a relatively stable job attitude, which a person has about the need satisfying ability of the job (Dalal, Brummel, Wee, & Thomas, 2008).

JI increases the likelihood of positive organizational variables. One such variable is work engagement. It has been observed that JI contributes for organizational development by increasing work engagement. Moreover, it has been found decreasing psychological detachment from work during holidays which results in increased level of work engagement (Kuhnel, Sonnentag, & Westman, 2009). Similarly, it enhances organizational commitment not only directly but also by causing work values to increase the level of organizational commitment (Ho, 2006). Rizwan (2011) observed that job involvement results in increased level of employee performance among bank employees of Pakistan.

Relationship Between POP, OCB and Job Attitudes

Grounded on principles of social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) when employees perceive organization as positive and favoring, the employees try to reciprocate through favorable responses. Similarly, when the employees perceive the organization unfavorable to them, they react by increasing unfavorable or reducing favorable responses towards the organization. One example of such a transaction is the negative relationship of POP with OCB, AC and JI. POP has often been observed to hamper the development process of organization by increasing the likelihood of negative work attitudes and behaviors. There is empirical evidence that has accumulated that POP is negative related with these variables, for instance Vigoda-Godat (2007), and Vigoda-Godat and Drory (2006) observed a strong relationship between POP and OCB in a sense that increase in POP resulted in a decrease in OCB. In Pakistani context, Ahmad (2010) studied the individual and interactive effects of POP on OCB.

Bashir, Nasir, Saeed, and Ahmed (2011) studied a Pakistani sample and observed that high levels of POP are associated with the perception that the psychological contract is broken which in turn leads the employees towards the perception of organization as lacking integrity, truthfulness and equality. This cynical attitude results in decreased trust in the organization (Davis & Gardner, 2004) and as one might expect, reduces the strength of the emotional bond with which the employee is tied to the organization.

Adams et al. (2002) proposed a model describing that in response to POP that the employee withdraw from the organization and can increase absenteeism, whereas affective commitment increases the likelihood that employee will become more involved in the organization and as a result reduces the effects of POP. Hence, Cropanzano, Howes, Grandey, and Toth (1997) found that POP results in a negative relationship with job involvement suggesting that when employees perceive high politics in the organization, they tend to be less involved in their jobs. On the other hand, there are some researchers who have found that POP is positively associated with JI. They reason for it by suggesting that when employees perceive organizational politics unfair, they become more involved in the job and hence escape themselves in the lap of politics itself (Delle, 2013; Ferris & Kacmar, 1992). Finding of Cropanzano et al. (1997) and Ying-Ni, Chih-Long, and Hung (2012) also confirmed that POP is negatively associated with job involvement, therefore, it is not surprising that POP results in a decreased level of job involvement. Therefore it is important to study effects of POP on OCB and job attitudes included AC and JI in indigenous settings.

In conclusion of aforementioned literature it is hypothesized that:

- 1)** Perceive organizational politics will negatively predict organizational citizenship behavior, affective commitment and job involvement.
- 1a)** General political behavior will negatively predict organizational citizenship behavior, affective commitment and job involvement.
- 1b)** Go-along-to-get-ahead will negatively predict organizational citizenship behavior, affective commitment and job involvement.
- 1c)** Pay and promotion policies will negatively predict OCB, affective commitment and job involvement.

Method

Sample

Convenient sampling technique was used to draw two samples i.e. university teachers 494 (men = 260, women = 234) from different university of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces of Pakistan. The age of the sample of teachers was ranged between of 22 to 63 ($M = 37.38$, $SD = 8.03$) years. Participants conveniently accessed were belonging to the various departments of the universities i.e. Psychology, History, Sociology, Urdu, Mass communication, English literature and linguistics, Public administration, Food sciences, Geography and Education. The inclusion criteria of the sample was those full time university teachers in public sector universities, who were having minimum job experience of two years.

Assessment Measures

All the constructs of the present study were measured through self-report instruments and which included the following:

Organizational Politics Scale (POPS: Kacmar & Carlson, 1997). The 15-item scale is scored on a 5-point Likert type rating. The internal consistency estimate was found to be .87 (Andrews & Kacmar, 2001).

Organizational Citizenship Behavior Scale (Lee & Allen, 2002). This 16-item scale measures helping behaviors that benefit specific individual (OCB-I) and the organization as a whole (OCB-O) using a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (Never) to 5 (Always). Authors reported the reliabilities .83 (OCB-I) and .88 (OCB-O).

Organizational Commitment Scale (Allen & Meyer, 1990). This scale includes 18 items on a 5-Point Likert scale. Alpha reliabilities of .87, .75 and .79, respectively, were obtained for the three subscales.

Job Involvement Scale (Kanungo, 1982). Job involvement was measured with the 10-item. This scale measures the degree of psychological importance of one's job using a five-point Likert scale. The alpha coefficient reported by author was .86.

Procedure

All the scales were available in open access except organizational commitment scale for which prior permission was taken from authors to use in current study. Participants were directly approached in their offices and they were ensured of the confidentiality of data provided by them. After seeking informed consent, they were briefed about the purpose and rationale of the present study and were given the questionnaires and written as well as oral instructions about responding on each item. The filled questionnaires from the teachers were collected back by the researcher himself or on his behalf by the helper.

Results

Descriptive analyses, reliability analyses and correlation are carried out. Multiple regression analyses are carried out for testing.

Table 1

Correlations Matrix for all the Variables Used in the Present Study (N = 494)

| Variables | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | M | SD | α |
|-----------|----|--------|--------|--------|-------|-------|--------|-------|------|----------|
| 1 | -- | .53*** | .78*** | .32*** | -.17* | -.17* | -.25** | 47.85 | 7.05 | .74 |
| 2 | -- | -- | .48** | .22* | -.23* | -.15* | -.15* | 7.11 | 2.04 | .71 |
| 3 | -- | -- | -- | -.28** | -.16* | -.24* | -.23* | 25.47 | 4.99 | .76 |
| 4 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -.17* | -.20* | -.33** | 15.26 | 3.40 | .71 |
| 5 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | .19* | .23* | 93.66 | 9.35 | .81 |
| 6 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | .36*** | 32.96 | 5.89 | .78 |
| 7 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 38.33 | 5.39 | .80 |

Note. 1 = perceived organizational politics; 2 = general political behavior; 3 = go-along-to-get-ahead; 4 = pay and promotion policies; 5 = organizational citizenship behavior; 6 = affective commitment; 7 = job involvement.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

Table 1 presents the bivariate zero-order correlations between the constructs operationalized for the present study. Transformational and transactional leaderships yield weak or negative correlations with POP and its construct scales, whereas significant positive correlations with OCB and its constructs except altruism. Table 1 demonstrates desired pattern of significant negative relationship between overall scores of POP and OCB.

Table 2

Multiple Regression Analysis of Perceived Organizational Politics Predicting Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Affective Commitment and Job Involvement (N = 494)

| Models Predictor Variable | OCB | | Affective Commitment | | Job Involvement | |
|---------------------------------|---------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| | β | ΔR^2 | β | ΔR^2 | β | ΔR^2 |
| POP | -.16** | | -.10* | | -.12** | |
| GPB | -.14* | | -.12* | | -.14** | |
| GATGA | -.18** | .08 | -.10* | .11 | -.20*** | .14 |
| PPP | -.15** | | -.31*** | | -.22*** | |

Note. POP = Perceived organizational politics; GPB = General political behavior; GATGA = Go-along-to-get-ahead; PPP = Pay and promotions policies; OCB = Organizational citizenship behavior.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 2 recapitulates the results of multiple regressions that were carried out to explore the contribution of POP in dependent variables of the present study. Table 16 imply that 8% of the variance in OCB can be designated to POP and its constructs ($R^2 = .08$) and overall the model was significant $\{F(4, 490) = 12.36, p < .001\}$ and among the predictors, POP overall, and its sub-constructs were found to be significant negative predictors of OCB.

Table 2 also displays the effect of POP and its constructs on affective commitment and explained 11% of the variance ($R^2 = .11$). Overall the model was significant $\{F(4, 490) = 19.61, p < .001\}$ and among the predictors POP overall and its sub-constructs were found to be significant negative predictors of affective commitment.

Finally Table 2 elucidates the 14% of variance in job involvement ($R^2 = .14$) that was attributed to POP. Overall the model was significant $\{F(4, 490) = 15.68, p < .001\}$.

Discussion

Present study primarily focused on detrimental effects of perceived organizational politics (POP) as an independent variable that has been tested by researchers with various organizational variables in certain settings, for instance POP has been found affecting job burnout (Vigoda-Godat & Talmud, 2010), turnover, neglect, loyalty, absenteeism and job satisfaction (Vigoda-Gadot, 2007), counterproductive work behaviors (Rosen, 2006), antisocial behavior (Bodla & Danish, 2013).

Current findings revealed that POP and its constructs included general political behavior (GPB), go-along-to-get-ahead (GATGA), and

pay-and- promotions-policies (PPP) not only predicted organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) negatively but also found to be the significant negative predictors of affective commitment (AC) and job involvement (JI). Thus our hypotheses 1, 2, 3 and 4 were supported

Organizational politics is conceived as the presence of incompatible goals and multiple interests that are outside the goals of organization, and to protect them by the influence of various techniques. Rosen et al. (2009) defined the concept of organizational politics as broad range of activities associated with the use of influence tactics to improve organizational personal or interests. Leaders use several political tactics not only to gain success in personal capacity but also attempt them to enhance the positive outcomes in an organization. But in the case of subordinates the phenomenon of politics in an organization is somewhat contrary to the leaders' view. Their view can be understood by the idea of Lewin (1936) that the perception of individuals worth much than that of real object of situation. Ferris and Kacmar (1992) also endorsed empirically that POP is elucidates greater impact on behaviors and attitudes of employees compared to actual work lace politics.

Organizational politics is perceived by the lower level employees as negative self-serving and manipulating behaviors that demand the cost of global organizational or others' interests for personal interests are termed as organizational politics (Ferris et al., 1989) e.g., using illegal ways to obtain power, bypassing the chain of command, and lobbying high level managers before promotion. Perception of such behaviors in an organization demotivate employees by executing inverse effect on job satisfaction, job stress and burnout (Vigoda-Godat & Talmund, 2010), increased job stress (Azeem, Mahmood, & Haq, 2010), poor task performance, fading their trust on leadership (Poon, 2006) and ultimately pave negative impact on their citizenship behavior and other positive attitudes like AC and JI. Vigoda-Godat (2007) confirmed the notion that POP generally reflects a negative image among organizational workers when they experience it at their workplace.

Keeping the above perspective of workplace politics in consideration, it was anticipated that POP might negatively associate with OCB, AC and JI. Present findings, in an indigenous context, are in same fashion with Ahmad (2010) who in a sample of 608 employees of 41 private organizations found POP as significant negative predictor of organizational commitment, job performance and OCB. Our findings have also been supported by a relatively recent studies of Gbadamosi and Chinaka (2011) who endorsed strong negative relationship between POP

and overall organizational commitment in a sample of 200 staff of academic and administrative staff of Babcock University, and Vigoda-Godat (2007) entailed POP negatively associated with OCB and organizational commitment among employees of public sector universities.

POP has been recognized as associated with negative behaviors and attitudes among employees. It was assumed that when employees identify high level of POP they also incline to negatively change their behavior and job involvement. Cropanzano et al. (1997) found that POP results in a negative relationship with job involvement suggesting that when employees perceive high politics in the organization, they tend to be less involved in their jobs. Moreover, according to its definition, job involvement is the psychological identification the employee has with the organization (Higgins et al., 1992). This identification depends upon the satisfaction an employee derives from the organization (McCroskey & Stacy, 2007), whereas POP results in a decreased level of satisfaction with job and with organization (Kacmar, Bozeman, Carlson, & Anthony, 1999). Therefore, it is not surprising that POP results in a decreased level of job involvement. Our results are similar to Danish (2000) when he examined a sample from various financial industries in Pakistan. He found that POP was significantly negatively related with JI. Similarly, Cropanzano et al. (1997) and Ying-Ni et al. (2012) confirmed that POP is negatively associated with job involvement, whereas Vigoda-Godat (2000) and Islam, Rehman, and Ahmed, (2013) in their empirical studies found POP as negative predictor of organizational commitment and other job attitudes among public sector employees in Israel and Pakistan accordingly.

General political behaviors (GPB) are those self-serving behaviors which are developed when explicit rules, policies or regulations are absent or dominantly vague. Such a situation creates uncertainty among employee and may result in decrease of positive behaviors like OCB, AC and JI. Go-along-to-get-ahead (GATGA) is apprehended as deficiency of actions and involvement by the employees in order to gain some advantage so they negatively perceived in work environment. Therefore and negative association of GATAG with OCB, AC and JI was reasonable. In the case of pay-and-promotion-policies (PPP) there is sufficient theoretical evidence (e.g. Ferris & King, 1991) that promotions are effected by the political behavior of the violation of performance evaluations and promotions' formal system. If the OCB, AC, JI or other positive outcomes in an organization are negatively

effected in the existence of PPP, that is expected and justified. Moreover our results are also understandable within the context of Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) that suggests that the employees want to pay back the organization positively if they perceive the organization as positive to them. Contrarily, when the organization is thought to be as negative to them (as often is perceived when POP is high) the employees reciprocate with negative acts, attitudes and behaviors which results in an increased level of negative outcomes.

Despite scarcity of literature available that explained the direct impact of aforementioned perceived political behaviors on outcome variables our findings were supported by Danaeefard, Balutbازه, and Kashi (2010) who examined an Iranian sample of 307 public sector universities' employee and found over all perceived organizational politics (PPP) and its constructs viz. general political behavior (GPB), go-along-to-get-ahead (GATGA) and pay and promotion policies (PPP) were significantly and negatively associated with OCB and its some distinguished facets, and Jam, et al. (2011) also observed negative relationship between POP and AC among 300 Pakistani public and private sector managerial employees.

In conclusion present findings are an empirical evidence for testing effect of POP and its constructs on OCB, affective commitment (AC) and job involvement (JI) for university teachers of Pakistan. Finally it has safely been concluded that our hypotheses related to POP-Outcomes relationship were empirically tested and the results supported existing literature and explained further the effect of the facets of POP on criterion variables of the present study. It is elucidated that POP, general political behavior, go-along-to-get-ahead, and pay and promotion policies were significant negative predictors of OCB, AC, and JI.

Limitations and Suggestions. Present study incorporated sample from public sector universities, which entails different organizational context as compare to typical organizations. Therefor current results should be seen and interpreted cautiously when generalized because POP is also context dependent phenomenon.

Use of self-report measure only is vulnerable to social desirability effect and influence of common method variance that may inflate the responses of the participants. A multimethod approach combining semi structured interviews with self-report measures in future exploration of these variables may reflect a picture of relationship pattern with more precision.

Implications. Our conclusions suggest that POP has been inversely associated with OCB, AC, and JI, and that may possibly hinder the effective role of university teachers but this situation can be encountered by the timely intervention of more responsive, vigilant and active role of departmental head/incharge/chairperson. Heads can overcome the negative effect of perception of politics and thus they can create desirable and effective behaviors like OCB, AC and, JI in teaching staff.

It is also suggested that head/incharge/chairperson not only can reduce the adverse impact of POP on teaching faculty but also can create atmosphere encouraging to positive behavioral outcomes like extra role behaviors AC and JI among them.

Present study, in addition, produces a rich material for both the theory and practice in discerning the perception of positive attitudes, organizational citizenship and political behaviors.

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