

## Employee Perception of organizational Politics – A review

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### INTRODUCTION

Politics is a universal phenomenon in organized society. Organizational Politics has emerged as an important variable in Organizational research. It has drawn the attention of management scientist and Organizational psychologists. This variable was being studied with a different perspective in the organization.

Political behaviour is not limited to those who hold public positions. It is found in every organization. Politics has been defined by Pfeffer as, “those activities taken within organizations to acquire, to develop and use power and other resources to obtain one’s preferred outcomes in a situation in which there are uncertainty or dimensions about choices.” With the globalization of business, there are other questions that come into play, especially those related to the changing technology, changing work culture, changing work cluster, high demands in job, changing life style and changing in mega environment consists of legal, political, economical, technical, socio-cultural component related to the business activities. The employees are human beings; normally they are ever changing, unpredictable and uncontrollable.

### REVIEWS BY VARIOUS STUDIES:

#### Perception of Organizational politics

Perception of Organizational politics is the degree to which respondents view their work environment as political and therefore unfair (Ferris et al., 1989). More specifically, perceptions of Organizational politics are subjective interpretations of the extent to which the work environment is characterized by co-workers and supervisors who engage in political behaviors or by Organizational policies that encourage such behaviors.

It has been proposed that individuals react to situations on the basis of these perceptions, rather than on reality per se (Lewin, 1936). In this paper, the researcher discussed the perception of organizational politics with the support of various reviews.

**Drory and Romm (1988)** in their study discussed seven concepts as key elements in defining Organizational politics: 1) behavioral means consisting of three types including formal, informal, and illegal, 2) acting against the organization, 3) power attainment, 4) conflict, 5) concealed motive. The three types of behavioral means are divided into formally sanctioned political behavior, informal or non-sanctioned behavior, and illegal behavior. In the study, done by Mintzberg did not concentrate on several factors as that of Drory and Romm.

**Drory and Romm (1988)** did another study and found that Organizational politics is more associated with informal than with formal or illegal behaviors. The study mainly revealed that

the employees' perception of politics is dependent upon circumstances and that as circumstances or elements of a situation vary so do perceptions regarding the politics.

**Drory (1993)** as a difference to the earlier studies contributed, in this study designed a Political Climate Scale for use in a study of 200 employees. He hypothesized that two factors impact one's perception of Organizational politics: satisfaction with superior and satisfaction with co-workers. Employees who have access to sources of Organizational power and status are in a position to take advantage of the political game, and to gain a greater share of Organizational benefits than they formally deserve. Consequently, they may not consider perception of politics as necessarily undesirable or detrimental to their own interests. Low status employees on the other hand, who are not in a position to benefit from a political decision-making style, are more likely to feel disadvantaged in a prevailing political climate. Their attitudes toward their work situation are therefore, more likely to be negatively affected. Drory's results supported his hypothesis.

Departing from previous definitions that include lists of political characteristics including power, control, hidden motives, Drory and Romm posit that Organizational politics is dependent upon a set of circumstances that employees may perceive as political. This work highlighted the relationship between A and B with regard to politics. It meant that if an relationship to B creates a perception of Organizational politics, than absent the condition A, the resulting behavior, B, may or may not be considered as politically charged. The study concluded that perception of politics is shaped by a set of circumstances that are defined by the employee.

**Gerald Ferris, Michele Kacmar (1992)** has contributed extensively to the literary review collection of Organizational politics in particular. They made a mark in the research scenario by contributing a universal scale to measure politics in any type of work environment. This study empirically tested the model of Organizational politics proposed by ferris, Russ & fandt and refined analysis of antecedents and consequences of politics perception. The study aimed to develop a concise, global measure of Organizational politics perception. Multiple regression analysis was used to test the four predictors of Organizational politics perception were found as Job Autonomy, Skill Variety, Feedback and Advancement opportunity. The outcomes Job involvement & Satisfaction were influenced by Political perceptions. Conceptualization revealed that Political Perceptions of employees is influenced by Organizational, environmental & personal factors and in turn influences the Organizational outcomes such as job involvement, Job anxiety, job satisfaction and withdrawal from the organization.

**Parker, Dipboye, and Jackson (1995)** launched a study using Ferris' framework of Organizational politics, which includes perceptions of employees in relationship to levels of hierarchy, locus of control, and satisfaction levels. The primary focus of their study surrounded the notion of trust and its correlation to the perception of politics. Specifically, they hypothesized that, Trust may moderate the extent to which Organizational politics is related to positive or negative attitudes. Respondents who are high on trust are less likely to perceive politics as a threat than those who have a low level of trust participants who have a high level of trust do not perceive a need for political action and are consequently less likely to engage in politics than those with lower levels of trust. When participants with high levels of trust engage in politics, they are more likely to engage in legitimate, constructive

political behavior than those with low levels of trust. Surprisingly, their hypothesis was not supported by the research. In fact, they found support for Ferris' claims that certain types of job and work qualities influenced perceptions of politics.

Ferris' research found that job promotion possibilities affected one's perception of negative politics. Parker, et. al. found "respondents perceived fewer politics to the extent that they believed that there were career development opportunities, rewards and recognition for good performance, and cooperation among work groups." Additionally, they found that the strongest correlate of the perception of politics existed in the element of intergroup cooperation. This little studied variable had a surprisingly powerful relationship to the perception of Organizational politics. They suggest that this finding provides important managerial direction to help reduce the negative effects of Organizational politics. By providing opportunities to reward cooperation and integrative Organizational structures, managers may mitigate the negative impact of Organizational politics. Parker, Dipboye and Jackson (1995) also suggested several important contributing actions related to employees' perception of Organizational politics. Employee perceptions of the organization as political were associated with lower levels of overall satisfaction; believing that the organization does not value high work standards, challenging work, and integrity; evaluations of senior management as ineffective; perceiving that the organization does not support innovation; and, believing that employees are not loyal to the organization.

**Patricia A. Wilson (1995)** made a major contribution by investigating the relationship between politics and Organizational commitment. The study investigated the effects of power and politics on Organizational commitment. Pearson's product moment correlations and stepwise regression analysis were used in this research. Politics and power were discovered to have a significant effect on the Organizational commitment of executives.

Ferris et al (1989) found that politics in organizations were related to decreased job satisfaction. Drory (1993) found that perceptions of politics were negatively related to job satisfaction Organizational commitment. He found that politics in the workplace had a potentially damaging effect on lower status employees, but no negative effect n higher status employees. Bozeman et al (1996) elaborated on the effect of the perceptual of Organizational politics on several outcomes. In their study the relationship between politics, job satisfaction, Organizational commitment and several other work outcomes was moderated by the variable of job self-efficacy. The relationship was stronger for individuals with a high job self-efficacy than with a low one. However, it should be noted than other studies found contradictory results For example, Parker et al (1995) found that workplace politics were not related to job satisfaction in any significant way.

**Wayne.A.Horchwarter, Pamela.L.Perrewew, Gerald.R.ferris, Rachel Guererio (1999)** conceptualized Organizational commitment and tested as a moderator of the relationship between perceived politics and the outcomes of intent to turnover and job tension using Moderate multiple regression analysis found that the positive relationship between Organizational politics and job tension decreased as Organizational commitment increased and the positive relationship between Organizational politics and intent to turnover decreased

as Organizational commitment increased. This study is an important contribution as it discussed the intent to turnover as an important variable.

**Eran Vigoda (2000)** aimed to promote understanding of employees' reactions to Organizational politics. Unlike various other studies, this is an important contribution as it has studied the relationship between politics and several other variables like Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment, turnover Intention and negligent behavior. Four variables have been discussed in this study unlike other studies with one or more variables. The relationship between perception of Organizational politics, job attitudes, and several other work outcomes was examined among 303 public sector employees in Israel. Perception of Organizational politics was found to have had a negative relationship with job attitudes. The research hypotheses were tested by multiple standard and hierarchical regressions. This study has accomplished several goals, which can be marked as making a significant contribution to the field, (1) exploring the relationship between perceptions of Organizational politics, job attitudes, exit, neglect, and job performance; (2) illuminating the special role of OP in traditional public systems and its implications for employees as well as for citizens/customers; (3) utilizing a non-American setting to allow a cross-cultural examination of Organizational Politics.

**Gerald.R.Ferris, Dwight.D.Frink, Dharm.P.S.Bhawuk, Jing Zhou, David.C.Gilmore (1996)** did a broad study on the co-worker political behavior which focused on whether diverse groups react differently to politics in the workplace as a function of understanding. Moderate regression analysis was used to test statistically. Understanding moderated the relationship between dimensions of politics perceptions and employee reactions for white males but not for racial minorities as hypothesized. The results for white females were mixed with significant moderating effects of understanding found for the co-worker political behavior- outcomes relationships, and for the political Organizational policies and practices, outcome relationship.

**K. Michele Kacmar, Dawn S. Carlson (1997)** stated that although political behavior in organizations was ubiquitous, measuring it is often difficult. In one attempt to create such a measure, Kacmar and Ferris (1991) developed and evaluated the psychometric properties of the Perceptions of Politics Scale (POPS). Later, Nye and Witt (1993) examined the dimensionality of POPS and its construct validity by comparing it with the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS; Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison & Sowa, 1986). The study extended these previous studies by using structural equation modeling to evaluate the dimensionality, reliability, and validity of POPS across three different studies utilizing nine different samples for a total of 2758 respondents. Results suggested that some of the original POPS items were ineffective and needed to be removed or replaced. Hence, some of the original items were deleted \, and additional items were generated and tested to produce a refined and revised version of POPS. Structural Equation Modeling Analysis and Exploratory Factor Analysis were used for data analysis.

This study was an attempt to reconstruct the universal tool of perception of politics, in which several statements were modified, removed, added according to the response of the respondents. This modified statement has been used later by various researchers in their study on politics.

## CONCLUSION

Organizational politics depends upon circumstances and situations. It affects the human behaviour in organizations. Several studies have been conducted in various sectors, and the outcome of Organizational politics has been observed and reviewed. The frequently studied variables in major studies were Job Satisfaction, Intent to turnover, Job Anxiety/Stress/Tension, Job Involvement, Organization Commitment. The frequently examined outcomes are Absenteeism, Actual Turnover, Innovation and Creativity, Intent to turnover, Job Anxiety/Stress/Tension, Job Involvement, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Organizational Commitment, Organizational Productivity, Organizational Satisfaction, Organizational Support, Perceptions of Equal Opportunity Employment, Opportunities Performance, Self-Appraisal, Supervisor Rating Political Behaviors, Reward Accuracy Satisfaction (other than job), Coworkers, Pay, Promotion Opportunities, Supervision, With Service, With Operation. It is majorly observed that the personal factors and the organization factors influence the job attitude of the employees like Job satisfaction, Organization Commitment, Job Involvement, which in turn will in turn cause stress related behaviours like Job burnout, Job anxiety thereby leading to turnover intention, absenteeism.

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