

Do Emotional Intelligence & Organizational Politics Influence the Employee Work Behaviors and Attitudes? Mediating Role of Political Skill

(Adakah Kecerdasan Emosi dan Politik Organisasi Mempengaruhi Kelakuan dan Sikap Pekerja? Kemahiran Berpolitik sebagai Pengantara)

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ABSTRACT

Employees are contemplated as an indispensable pillar of the organization. Their attitudes and behaviors at the workplace have a drastic effect on organizational performance and success. Employees' emotional intelligence and political skill at the workplace have immense importance in shaping their behaviors and attitudes. On the other hand, behaviors and attitudes plummet towards negativity in the politically polluted environment in the organization. To investigate the impact of emotional intelligence and perception of organizational politics on employees' behaviors and attitudes through the mediation of political skill, the current study collected data from employees of the banking sector of Pakistan. The data were collected through questionnaires by applying non-probability convenient sampling technique. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structure equation modeling (SEM) techniques have been used for statistical analysis. The results revealed the positive interplay of emotional intelligence with behaviors and attitudes. Further, results also indicated a negative association of perception of organizational politics with behaviors and attitudes. In addition, the findings depicted that political skill mediates the relationship of emotional intelligence with behaviors and attitudes. Similarly, political skill also mediates the interplay of perception of organizational politics with behaviors and attitudes. The scant research attention had been given to explore the mediating role of political skill among these variables and present study addressed this gap. The significance of the study was provided at the end. The limitations were also delineated which followed directions for future research.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence; organizational politics; political skill; employee behaviors; and attitudes

ABSTRAK

Pekerja merupakan tulang utama organisasi. Sikap dan tingkah laku mereka di tempat kerja mempunyai kesan drastik terhadap prestasi dan kejayaan organisasi. Kecerdasan emosi dan kemahiran berpolitik di tempat kerja amat penting dalam membentuk tingkah laku dan sikap pekerja. Sebaliknya, tingkah laku dan sikap yang negatif akan menghasilkan persekitaran politik yang tercemar dalam organisasi. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki kesan kecerdasan emosi dan persepsi politik organisasi terhadap tingkah laku dan sikap pekerja melalui pemboleh ubah perantara kemahiran berpolitik. Data diperolehi daripada pekerja sektor perbankan di Pakistan melalui soal selidik dengan menggunakan teknik persampelan mudah. Analisis faktor pengesahan (CFA) dan teknik pemodelan persamaan struktur (SEM) telah digunakan untuk analisis statistik. Hasil kajian menunjukkan hubungan positif antara kecerdasan emosi dengan tingkah laku dan sikap pekerja. Seterusnya, kajian mendapati persepsi politik organisasi mempunyai hubungan negatif dengan tingkah laku dan sikap pekerja. Hasil kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa kemahiran berpolitik sebagai pemboleh ubah perantara antara kecerdasan emosi, persepsi politik organisasi dengan tingkah laku dan sikap. Kajian ini dijalankan untuk memenuhi jurang kekurangan kajian mengenai hubungan kemahiran berpolitik sebagai pemboleh ubah perantara dengan pemboleh ubah kajian. Kepentingan dan limitasi kajian, serta cadangan kajian untuk masa depan juga dibincangkan.

Kata kunci: Kecerdasan emosi; politik organisasi; kemahiran berpolitik; tingkah laku; sikap pekerja

INTRODUCTION

Employees are considered a fundamental tool to augment the performance and reputation of an organization. The organizations work for employees to design their positive

attitudes and behaviors because these help firms to achieve their stated objectives. The current study investigated three imperative attitudes and behaviors i.e., commitment, job satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behavior which assist the organization in achieving goals (Qureshi

et al. 2015). Emotional intelligence and organizational politics are two important factors which shape employees' attitudes and behaviors. These two constructs have got a great deal of attention from scholars, especially in the past two decades. Previous research showed that emotional intelligence influences variety of outcomes, including academic achievement, mental and physical health, social support and overall well-being (e.g., Ali, Amorim & Chamorrow-Premuzic 2009; Johnson, Batey & Holdsworth 2009; Song et al. 2010). Further, several studies investigated the relationship of perception of organizational politics with numerous work behaviors and attitudes, such as job satisfaction, job burnout, negligent behavior, organizational commitment and turnover intentions (e.g., Chang, Rosen & Levy 2009; Miller, Rutherford & Kolinsky 2008). Moreover, emotionally positive employees demonstrate positive and strong emotional state and vice versa (Mayer & Salovey 1997). Individuals with a high level of emotional intelligence are more satisfied with their jobs. Similarly, emotionally intelligent employees derive positive behavior towards customers, co-workers, and organization (Day & Carroll 2004). Carmeli (2003) argued that emotional intelligence augment altruistic behavior which enables employees to display positive mood. Employees with positive moods are more likely to express helping behaviors. When employees feel emotionally strong, they demonstrate the commitment to their organization (Naderi-Anari 2012). Affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano 1996) also states that emotional experiences at workplace effect individuals' short and long-term behaviors and attitudes. On the other hand, employees tend to show less commitment to the organization when they feel that work environment is polluted with politics (Jam et al. 2011). Politically poisoned workplace also forces employees to stop helping hands towards coworkers. Employees begin to say negative words about the organization. If there are extremely politics in the organization then employees show exhausted defiance towards work and organization. This causes to reduce their satisfaction with the organization (Meisler & Vigoda-Gadot 2014).

Organizations have become political arena (Meisler 2014). It is, now, mandatory for employees to acquire political skills to become successful in an organization. Ferris, Davidson, and Perrewé (2005) defined political skill as the ability to reckon others at workplace i.e., coworkers, supervisors, and subordinates etc. and use this information to influence them in gaining personal and organizational objectives. Positive and strongly emotional intelligence provide confidence to employees to interact, persuade, negotiate, and manipulate others at the workplace. The persuasion, negotiation, interaction, and manipulation are the essential parts of political skills (Meisler 2014). Further, employees with high level of emotional intelligence are able to build a strong web of political skill which further motives them to help others, tends to show commitment with the organization, and demonstrates satisfaction with the job (Ferris et al. 2007).

In the politically polluted workplace, employees feel fear to interact and negotiate with others because they think that exchange of information through interaction may be used against them. It reduces the linkage among individuals which dashes social fabric of the organization. Furthermore, organizational politics increases employees' fear to acquire political skills which, in return, cause to reduce their commitment, satisfaction, and extra-role behaviors (Jam et al. 2011). Moreover, very scant amount of research is available in which the mediation effect of political skill was investigated. Meisler (2014) investigated mediating effect of emotional intelligence and job satisfaction and directed to explore this relationship by including more predictors and outcomes; attitudes and behaviors. The contemporary study filled these gaps. Following are the research questions and objectives of this study.

Research Questions:

1. Does emotional intelligence influence the employees' attitudes (organizational commitment & job satisfaction) and behaviors (organizational citizenship behavior)?
2. Does perceived organizational politics influence the employees' attitudes (organizational commitment & job satisfaction) and behaviors (organizational citizenship behavior)?
3. Do political skills mediate the relationship of emotional intelligence, perceived organizational with the employees' attitudes (organizational commitment & job satisfaction) and behaviors (organizational citizenship behavior)?

Research Objectives:

1. To examine the effect of emotional intelligence on employees' attitudes (organizational commitment & job satisfaction) and behaviors (organizational citizenship behavior).
2. To investigate the effect of perceived organizational politics on employees' attitudes (organizational commitment & job satisfaction) and behaviors (organizational citizenship behavior)?
3. To examine the mediating role of political skills between the relationship of emotional intelligence, perceived organizational and employees' attitudes (organizational commitment & job satisfaction) and behaviors (organizational citizenship behavior)?

LITERATURE REVIEW

INTEGRATING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE WITH POLITICAL SKILL AND EMPLOYEE BEHAVIORS

Recently, some studies examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and political skills (e.g. Greenstein 2004). Different studies have been conducted to examine the relationship between political skill and

employees' behaviors and attitudes (Kimura 2014). Past research showed that there is a positive relationship between political skill and job satisfaction (Ferris et al. 2007; Ferris et al. 2009), job performance (Ferris et al. 2007; Hochwarter et al. 2007; Blickle, Below & Johannsen 2011; Chaudhry, Ashraf & Jaffri 2012; Wei, Chiang & Wu 2012; Bing et al. 2011; Munyon et al. 2014), organizational citizenship behaviors (Ferris et al. 2009), and organizational commitment. Past studies also indicated a negative relationship between political skill and turnover intentions (Banister & Meriac 2014). Furthermore, Munyon et al. (2014) proved that there is a positive association between political skill and job satisfaction. As workers and individuals with political skills remain calm and execute their efforts to achieve their objectives and goals (Ferris et al. 2007; Treadway et al. 2004). The political skill-organizational citizenship behaviors relationship is tested in very limited research. Similarly, the political skill-organizational commitment is also explored in very limited studies. There is scant research available which explored the relationship between political skill and employees work behaviors and attitudes, so these constructs need further investigation. Moreover, Carmeli (2003) claimed that altruistic behavior may be enhanced by emotional intelligence because high emotional intelligence empowers workers to shift their negative moods into positive. Employees having positive emotions are more expected to perform helpful behaviors (Carmeli & Josman 2006). Indeed, employees with high emotional intelligence are more involve in altruistic behaviors, socially interactive and keep the positive state of mind (Hemmati et al. 2013). Similarly, Wong and Law (2002) argued that employees with high emotional intelligence have positive affective emotions and experiences at the workplace and also demonstrate the higher level of job satisfaction. In contrast, employees with low emotional intelligence have low positive emotions and experiences at the workplace and also demonstrate the lower level of job satisfaction (Wong & Law 2002). Further, Carmeli (2003) argued that employees with high emotional intelligence are more likely committed to the organization and have good relationships with their managers and supervisors (Jordan & Troth 2011).

The direct interplay of emotional intelligence with employees' attitudes and behaviors looks oversimplify without the intervention of mediating variable. Political skill was used for this purpose. Employees with strong emotional intelligence are reckoned to show greater political skill because they have the good competence to understand and perceive coworkers' emotions at the workplace (Meisler 2014) which in turn, affects their behaviors and attitudes (Treadway et al. 2004; Ferris et al. 2009). Employees with greater confidence to interact (an avenue of political skill) with coworkers, subordinates, and supervisors are tended to show commitment to the organization. They are ready to assist other at their job duties that show their helping behaviors. Similarly, employees high in political skill's avenues are most

likely to satisfy with their jobs (Todd et al. 2009). Thereby, it could be argued that political skill mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and employees' behaviors and attitudes. Furthermore, there is limited research available on the relationship between emotional intelligence and political skill especially in the context of Pakistan. In many studies, the direct (e.g., Todd et al. 2009; Bing et al. 2011; Treadway et al. 2004; Blickle et al. 2011) and moderating (e.g., Treadway et al. 2004; Brouer et al. 2009) effects of political skill have been explored but there is very limited research available in which mediating role of political skill was explored in the relationship between emotional intelligence-employee behaviors (Meisler 2014; Butt et al. 2017; Mubeen, Ashraf & Nisar 2016). In the current study, the mediating role of political skill is explored between 'emotional intelligence-employee behaviors and attitudes' relationship in the context of Pakistan.

Based on above arguments and literature, following hypotheses are generated.

- H_{1a} There is positive relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction
- H_{1b} There is positive relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational commitment
- H_{1c} There is positive relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behaviors
- H_{2a} Political skill mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction
- H_{2b} Political skill mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational commitment
- H_{2c} Political skill mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behaviors

INTEGRATING PERCEPTION OF ORGANIZATIONAL POLITICS WITH POLITICAL SKILL AND EMPLOYEE BEHAVIORS

First of all, Ferris (1989) established the model of perception of organizational politics. Ferris, Harrell-Cook, Dulebohn (2000) provided a definition of perception of organizational politics as "it involves an individual attribution to behaviors of self-serving intent, and is defined as an individual's subjective evaluation about the extent to which work environment is characterized by co-workers and supervisors who demonstrate such self-serving behavior". Ferris et al. (1989) presented three factors of perception of organizational politics which include, "General political behavior", "Go along to get ahead" and "Pay and promotion". General political behavior refers to individuals' acts of self-serving style to in acquiring their personal objectives (Kacmar & Carlson 1997). Go along to get ahead, the second factor of perception of organizational politics refers to individuals' limited interest and they perform different activities silently to secure and achieve their own interests. The third factor of perception of organizational politics

is pay and promotion; it refers politics to promotional policies and decisions of organization (Ferris et al. 1989). There is limited research available on the perception of organizational politics-political skill relationship in the literature. Therefore, the perception of organizational politics always influences rewards systems for individuals in the organization and when employees and workers perform their duties in an environment which is political, they don't have confidence on the reward systems in the organization and they start showing negative behaviors (Cropanzano et al. 1997). Moreover, the relationship of perception of organizational politics and political skill has not been explored widely in the literature.

The research on the perception of organizational politics indicates that it influences positively on different job and employee outcomes and behaviors encompassing turnover intention (Dunham 1977) and job stress (Azeem et al. 2010). Perception of organizational politics has several negative outcomes and consequences which include organizational commitment (e.g. Chang et al. 2009), communication creation (Eisenhardt & Bourgeois 1988). The findings of different studies showed that perception of organizational politics is negative related to organizational commitment (Chang et al. 2009). Job attitudes and perception of organizational politics, both are beneficial in elaborating work behaviors and outcomes including turnover intentions. Several research studies showed a negative association between perception of organizational politics and equity, fairness and, justice (Cropanzano et al. 1997; Bozeman et al. 1996). Similarly, Chang et al. (2009) and Dunham (1977) argued that perception of organizational politics relates positively with turnover intention. The people who are working in a political environment don't show extra-role behaviors, so there is a negative relationship between perception of organizational politics and organizational citizenship behaviors (Rosen, Levy & Hall 2006). Similarly, Cullen, Fan, and Liu (2014) found that there is a high association between supervisor political support and employee behaviors and attitudes. When employees feel that they have the political support of their supervisors and management, they try to accomplish their work with effectively. Several studies also claimed that in presence of perception of organizational politics, the workers show less engagement, not satisfied with the job and show lower organizational citizenship behaviors (Cullen et al. 2014). Previous research showed mixed findings of perception of organizational politics and employees attitudes and behaviors (Cropanzano et al. 1997; Randall et al. 1999).

In a politically polluted workplace, the links of employees with coworkers, supervisors, and subordinates become weak. This type of environment creates negative effect on links between these stakeholders which in turn, affects attitudes and behaviors of employees (Cheema 2008). It means that organizational politics discourage positive and constructive links (e.g., political skills) among employees. Due to negative effect of organizational politics on political skill, employees' level of job satisfaction

also diminishes (Cullen et al. 2014). Furthermore, when employees feel that there are not given rewards fairly due to politics prevailing at workplace, they stop to creating and building relationships and links with others that causes for demonstration of negative behaviors and attitudes (Cropanzano et al. 1997). In line of this discussion, it may be argued that political skill mediates the interplay of perception of organizational politics-employees' behaviors and attitudes. Moreover, many studies have found the moderating role of political skill in the perception of organizational politics-employee behaviors and attitudes relationship (see Kimura 2013; Kacmar et al. 2013; Jam et al. 2011) but there is the limited body of knowledge available at the mediating role of political skills between these variables.

Based on above literature and arguments, following hypotheses are generated;

- H_{3a} There is negative relationship between perception of organizational politics and job satisfaction
- H_{3b} There is negative relationship between perception of organizational politics and organizational commitment
- H_{3c} There is negative relationship between perception of organizational politics and organizational citizenship
- H_{4a} Political Skill mediates the relationship between perception of organizational politics and job satisfaction
- H_{4b} Political Skill mediates the relationship between perception of organizational politics and organizational commitment
- H_{4c} Political Skill mediates the relationship between perception of organizational politics and organizational citizenship behaviors.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Theoretical model has been underpinned on the basis of social exchange theory (Shore & Wayne 1993) and affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano 1996), and all relationships have been proposed on the theoretical and empirical basis. Social exchange theory (SET) elaborates the employment relationship as resources exchange process that is directed by the rule of reciprocity (Coyle-Shapiro, Kessler & Purcell 2004). Social exchange theory (SET) emphasizes the concept of obligations and reciprocation. Furthermore, SET provides a theoretical foundation to describe why employees behave positively in their work and organization. When organizations fulfill obligations then ultimately employees' attitudes and behaviors become favorable. Based on the social exchange theory (Homans & Merton 1961), when employees' perceive that their organization is putting efforts to control the negative organizational politics, they tend to have positive attitudes and behaviors in return. Meanwhile, employees put efforts to manage their emotions intelligently and they

demand favorable circumstances from the organization in return that leads to having positive attitudes and behaviors at workplace. Moreover, Weiss and Cropanzano (1996), presented affective event theory and it deemed as important theoretical development regarding emotions at the workplace. It is supportive to that studies in which researchers examine the role of emotions in organizations (Cole, Walter & Bruch 2008; Walter & Bruch 2009).

Affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano 1996) also stated that emotional experiences at workplace effect individuals' short and long-term behaviors and attitudes. Work events (i.e. Training session to increase emotional competencies) leads toward negative and positive emotions these emotions ultimately affect the employees' attitudes such as organizational commitment and job satisfaction and behaviors (Ashkanasy, Härtel & Daus 2002).

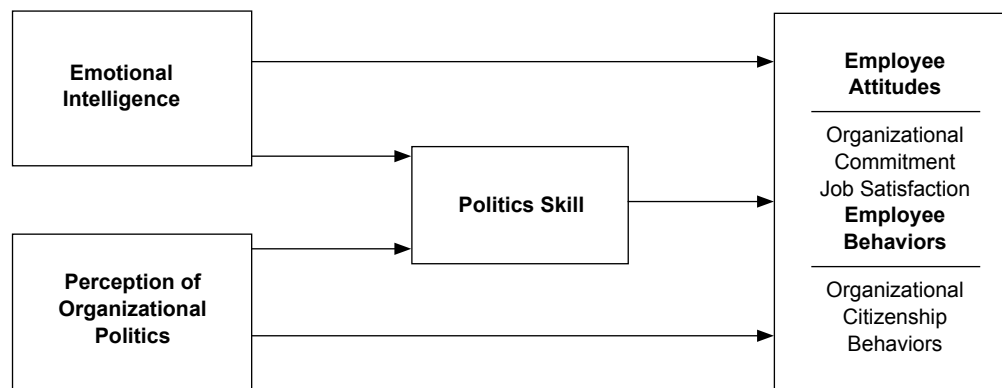


FIGURE 1. Theoretical framework

RESEARCH METHODS

PARTICIPANT & PROCEDURE

The current study collected data through questionnaires from employees of three private banks [Habib Bank Limited (HBL), Muslim Commercial Bank (MCB), and Allied Bank Limited (ABL)]. These employees were working in different departments of these banks i.e., financial, service, marketing, and Islamic Banking. The participants came from the variety of ranks of organizational hierarchy e.g., employees and managers (low, mid, and upper-level). The data were collected from employees of different branches of HBL, MCB, and ABL located in two cities; Lahore and Gujranwala by using non-probability convenient sampling. The lists of branches were obtained from respective headquarters based in Lahore. About 500 questionnaires were distributed among employees. Two avenues for questionnaires distribution were adopted. First, an online of questionnaires was sent to Human Resource (HR) professionals and requested to pass this survey to their employees. Second, HR professionals were approached and hard copy of questionnaires was handed over with a request to distribute among employees. About 317 questionnaires were returned back (an actual response rate of 63.4 percent). During the data screening process, 7 questionnaires (containing missing values) were eliminated and 12 questionnaires were excluded because of outliers of values. Remaining 300 questionnaires were included in the analysis process (an effective response rate of 59.8 percent).

DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographic profile elaborated that most of the respondents in the sample, this is 187 (62.4%), were male while remaining 113 (37.6%) were female. Regarding the age group, 60% of the participants were in the age group of 30-35 years. This is followed by those in the age group of 36 and above with 70 respondents which accounted for 23.3% of the sample. In the age group of 20-24 years, there were 31 respondents, representing 10.3% of the sample. The smallest age group ranged between 25-29 years, which accounted for 6.4% of the sample size. Additionally, a high proportion of the respondents were Master's degree holders, which accounted for 73.6% of 221 respondents, while the remaining 79 respondents were representing 26.4% were graduates. Similarly, regarding the job status, 169 participants were permanent with 56.4% and remaining participants (131) were doing jobs on the contractual basis with 43.6%.

MEASURES

Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS; Wong & Law 2002; Law, Wong & Song 2004) used to measure emotional intelligence and this scale consists of sixteen (16) items. This scale demonstrates conceptualization akin to Mayer and Salovey's (1997) definition of emotional intelligence. This scale is based on ability model which was presented by different researchers (e.g., Cartwright & Pappas 2008; Devonish & Greenidge 2010; Daus & Ashkanasy 2005; Sy, Tram & O'Hara 2006). Recently, umpteen scholars had tested this scale in

different cultural contexts (i.e., Meisler 2014; Whitman et al. 2011; Shi & Wang, 2007). This scale consists of four dimensions of emotional intelligence that were presented by a scholar of ability model. The first dimension is the self-emotion appraisal, sample item includes; “*I have a good understanding of my own emotions*”. The second dimension is others’ emotions appraisal, sample item encompasses; “*I am a good observer of others’ emotions*”. The third dimension is the use of emotions, sample item comprises; “*I am a self-motivated person*”. The fourth dimension is regulation of emotions, sample item contains; “*I can always calm down quickly when I am very angry*”. Items were answered by respondents on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Further, the perception of organizational politics was measured with the 6-items scale that is developed by Hochwarter et al. (2003). This scale measures the three dimensions of perception of organizational politics. This scale was used in various contexts by different scholars. Sample items include; “*Many employees are trying to maneuver their way into the group*” and “*Individuals are stabbing each other in the back to look good in front of others*”. Items were answered by respondents on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Additionally, political skill is measured with shorten eight-item scale of Political Skill Inventory (PSI) (Ferris et al. 2005). This PSI encompassed four dimensions of political skill included; social astuteness, networking ability, interpersonal influence and apparent sincerity identified by Ferris et al. (2005). Sample items encompass; “*When communicating with others, I try to be genuine in what I say and do*” and “*I am able to make most people feel comfortable and at ease around me*”. Items were answered by respondents on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). A 3-item scale which is developed by Cammann et al. (1983) has been used to measure the job satisfaction. Sample item includes; “*My job is very enjoyable*”. Items were answered by respondents on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). We adopted the scale of affective commitment that was used by Rhoades, Eisenberger and Armeli (2001). Sample item encompasses; “*I feel personally attached to my work*

organization”. Items were answered by respondents on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The scale developed by Lee and Allen (2002) was adapted to measure organizational citizenship behaviors. Sample item comprises; “*Take action to protect the organization from potential problems*”. Items were answered by respondents on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

FINDINGS

CONFIRMATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS

To carry out the Confirmatory Factor Analysis, the study estimated measurement model to evaluate factor loading. Results showed the factor loadings, composite reliability and average variance extract that are used to access the convergent validity of constructs. The validity of constructs is said to be convergent when indicators/items load highly (> 0.50) on their associate constructs (Hair et al. 2010) and findings divulged that values of factor loadings are greater than 0.50. Moreover, items loading range for emotional intelligence is 0.52 to 0.95. Minimum item loading is 0.62 and maximum loading is 0.90 for perceived organizational politics. Additionally, the range of loading for political skills is 0.67 to 0.90. Similarly, the items loadings range for employees’ behaviors and attitudes is 0.56 to 0.87. Convergent validity of constructs is measured by using average variance extract and composite reliability. The value of AVE for all constructs is above 0.50, and composite reliability is greater than 0.8, indicating that convergent validity of all constructs has been established.

CORRELATION ANALYSIS

Table 1 elaborated the descriptive and correlation analysis. Results enlightened that all under study variables are significantly correlated with each other. This correlation matrix identifies that emotional intelligence is highly and significantly correlated with organizational citizenship behavior ($r = 0.56, p < .05$).

TABLE 1. Descriptive & correlations analysis

Variables	Mean	SD	EI	POP	OC	OCB	JS	PS
EI	3.98	.747	1					
POP	1.82	.623	-.35**	1				
OC	3.70	.728	.53**	-.35**	1			
OCB	4.01	.559	.56**	-.43*	.48**	1		
JS	3.99	.553	.50**	-.33**	.44**	.44**	1	
PS	3.89	.595	.49**	-.44**	.50**	.47**	.51**	1

Note: **P < .01; N = number of participants; SD = standard deviation; EI = emotional intelligence; POP = perception of politics; EC = employee commitment; OCB = organizational citizenship behavior; JS = job satisfaction; PS = political skills

STRUCTURE EQUATION MODELING

DIRECT EFFECTS

Table 2 elaborate that emotional intelligence is significantly and positively related to job satisfaction ($\beta = .610$; $P < .05$), organizational commitment ($\beta = .521$; $P < .05$) and organizational citizenship behavior ($\beta = .432$; $P < .05$) and supported to H1_a, H1_b & H1_c. These findings identified the crucial role of employees' emotional intelligence and purported that individuals' with high level of emotional intelligence are able to retain positive behavior and attitudes towards organization. Moreover, findings reveal that perceptions of organizational politics have the negative and insignificant relationship with job satisfaction ($\beta = -.056$; $P > .05$) thus, H3_a is not supported. Few previous studies also showed the mix results as Abbas et al., (2012) also reported weak and insignificant relationship

between organizational politics and job satisfaction. Moreover, the direct relationship between POP and JS is insignificant due to contextual factors, as in banking sector of Pakistan, there are number of other prominent factors that contribute towards employees' satisfaction. Although POP has negative association with JS but it not directly effect to the employees' of banks. Furthermore, the relationship between perceived organizational politics and job satisfaction is indirectly significant through their political skills. Additionally, perceptions of organizational politics is significantly but negatively associated with organizational commitment ($\beta = -.223$; $P < .05$) and organizational citizenship behavior ($\beta = -.129$; $P < .05$), supported to H3_b & H3_c. These results show that employees' perceptions regarding organizational politics play crucial role to negatively influence their attitudes and behaviors. It means that organizational politics is harmful for employees' behaviors and attitudes.

TABLE 2. Standardized estimates of direct effects

Indications of relationship of variables			Standardized Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Results
JS	<---	EI	.610	.07	8.71	.004	Significant
OC	<---	EI	.521	.09	5.78	***	Significant
OCB	<---	EI	.432	.11	3.92	.001	Significant
JS	<---	POP	-.056	.09	-0.62	.342	Insignificant
OC	<---	POP	-.223	.13	-1.71	***	Significant
OCB	<---	POP	-.129	.05	-2.48	.009	Significant
JS	<---	PS	.443	.05	8.54	***	Significant
OC	<---	PS	.212	.10	2.07	.023	Significant
OCB	<---	PS	.093	.25	0.37	.201	Insignificant

EI = emotional intelligence; POP = perception of organizational politics; PS = political skill; JS = job satisfaction; OC = organizational commitment; OCB = organizational citizenship behaviors

MEDIATING ROLE OF POLITICAL SKILLS

INDIRECT EFFECTS

Table 3 divulges the direct, indirect and total effects of predictors towards endogenous variables. Results identify that political skills significantly and partially mediate the relationship between emotional intelligence and employees' attitudes (organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behavior) as direct, indirect and total effects are significant ($P < .05$; $t > 1.64$), thus these findings supported to H2_a, H2_b, and H2_c. Results elaborate that political skills explain the direct relationship between employees' emotional intelligence and their attitudes and behaviors. Additionally, findings also proved that political skills significantly mediate the relationship between perceptions of organizational politics and employees' attitudes (organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behavior) as direct, indirect and total effects are significant ($P < .05$; $t > 1.64$), thus supported to H4_a, H4_b, and H4_c.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the role of emotional intelligence and perceived organizational politics to shape the employees' attitudes (job satisfaction, organizational commitment) and behaviors (organizational citizenship behavior). This study was descriptive and quantitative in nature. Moreover, scant literature had addressed the association of emotional intelligence and perception of organizational politics with political skill (e.g. Meisler 2014; Jam et al. 2011). Findings proved that emotional intelligence and perceived organizational politics are significantly related to employees' attitudes and behaviors and supported to our hypotheses. Moreover, political skills significantly mediate these relationships. Meanwhile, the results of current study supported all four hypotheses. First, the current study had depicted that emotional intelligence was positively related to employee behaviors (H₁). Second, the findings of the study supported the political skill mediated the association between emotional intelligence and employee behaviors

TABLE 3. Direct, indirect and total effects of constructs

Endogenous Variables	Effects	EI	POP
Organizational Commitment	Direct Effect	.521**	-.223*
	Indirect Effect	.041*	-.024*
	Total Effect	.562**	-.247*
Job Satisfaction	Direct Effect	.610**	-.056*
	Indirect Effect	-.011*	-.014*
	Total Effect	.599**	-.070*
Organizational Citizenship Behavior	Direct Effect	.432**	-.129*
	Indirect Effect	.002*	-.052*
	Total Effect	.434**	-.181*

Mediator: Political Skills

(H₂). Third, analysis confirmed negative link between perception of organizational politics and employee behaviors (H₃). Fourth, it is also depicted in line of this study that political skill mediated the association between perception of organizational politics and employee behaviors (H₄). These findings are consistent with previous research (e.g. Naderi-Anari 2012; Cohen & Abedallah 2015; Jam et al. 2011; Vigoda-Gadot & Meisler 2010; Meisler & Vigoda-Gadot 2014; Naderi-Anari 2012; Cohen & Abedallah 2015; Meisler 2014; Jam et al. 2011). This study aligned and supported by social exchange theory and affective events theory because all the proposed relationships have been underpinned on the basis of SET and AET. Meanwhile, results of this study give insight understanding regarding the application of social exchange theory to understand the under-study constructs. This study elaborated the crucial role of emotional intelligence, organizational politics and employees' political skills towards employees' behaviors. Results purported that high level of emotional intelligence and employees' perceptions regarding organizational politics play a significant role to change their behavioral outcomes. Additionally, the study also discussed the important role of employees' political skills. Additionally, the study highlighted the importance of emotional intelligence and organizational politics to shape the individuals' attitudes and behaviors, therefore organizations need to pay great attention to improve the employees' emotional intelligence level and to tackle the negative perceptions regarding organizational politics.

THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTION

As the theoretical model has been underpinned with social exchange theory, therefore, this study aligned and supported to social exchange theory because findings of this study give insight understanding regarding the application of social exchange theory to understand the under-study constructs. Moreover, it enriches the body of knowledge to understand the role of emotional intelligence and perceived organizational politics to shape the employees' attitudes. The study also contributes to the literature of political skills as it attempted to examine the

mediating role of political skills that was almost ignored in the literature. The present study showed the mediation effect of political skill among the relationships of emotional intelligence, the perception of organizational politics and employee behaviors that advanced our knowledge about the crucial role of emotional intelligence and perception of organizational politics towards employees' behaviors. It contributes to the literature of employees' attitudes with different perspectives as it integrated the emotional competencies and organizational politics to predict these attitudes.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

This study highlighted the crucial role of employees' emotional intelligence towards employees' positive attitudes, thus organizations can learn from these findings and they should organize training workshops and learning sessions for employees to increase their emotional intelligence level. Moreover, organizations can organize intellectual capacity building programs to improve the level of emotional intelligence. This study gives insight understanding regarding the crucial role of employees' behaviors in the success of organizations. Managers can utilize the results of this study by focusing to shape the employees' positive behaviors. Organizations can positively change their employees' behaviors by improving the level of employees' emotional intelligence and they can polish their political skills effectively that ultimately leads to influence their behavioral outcomes. Additionally, study results highlighted that organizational politics is harmful as it badly influences to the employees' attitudes. Therefore, managers can use study findings to develop policies and strategies to manage and overcome the negative organizational politics at workplace. Furthermore, the findings of present study suggested that lower level of perception of organizational politics and higher level of emotional intelligence lead to greater level of political skill. The present study was considered the respondents from the banking sector, hence this study recommended to management of the banks to augment employee behavior positively it is needed to enhance the level of emotional

intelligence and decrease organizational politics which assist to enhance organizational performance at the end. As this study identified the important role of organizational politics, organizational can develop strategies to manage and overcome the negative organizational politics at workplace. Due to great importance of emotional intelligence highlighted in this study, organizations can organize intellectual capacity building programs to improve the level of emotional intelligence.

LIMITATIONS & FUTURE DIRECTIONS

While our study has some valuable strength, it also included few limitations that recommend promising future directions. Firstly, data were collected from one source that can crease issue of common method variance. Secondly, the data were gathered from banking sector of Pakistan. Nevertheless, this may reduce external validity. Thirdly, this study also ignored the demographic characteristics and contextual factors that play the significant role to shape employees' attitudes, therefore future studies should concentrate on demographics and contextual and cultural factors in their studies. Fourthly, it just focused on the one aspect of emotions i.e. emotional intelligence and ignored the other aspect of emotions management that can play an important role to shape individual behaviors. This study only focused on employees and ignored the leader-follower relationship. Future studies may integrate emotions with leadership effectiveness by using dyadic approach and may examine the role of leaders' emotional labor strategies along emotional intelligence to predict their followers' behaviors. Furthermore, in past studies, scant research attention had been given to explore the relationship among emotional intelligence, the perception of organizational politics and different employee behaviors/attitudes/reactions i.e. turnover intentions, counter-productive behaviors and task performance. Hence, it is recommended to design future research to investigate the relationships among these constructs. Future research can enlarge our research model and explore other mediating variables that may explain the association between constructs. Further studies should be conducted in other cultures, countries, sectors and with a variety of respondents to better understand the relationship among emotional intelligence, the perception of organizational politics, political skill, and employee behaviors.

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