



Mediating role of perceived organizational support in relations between organizational politics with job stress, job satisfaction and job performance

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Abstract

Perceptions of organizational politics and political behavior are common and conventional phenomena in every organization and can affect the outcome of the job. Considering the significance of satisfaction, performance and stress structures in the workplace, the present study aim was assessment the mediating effect of Perceived Organizational Support (POS) on Relationship between politics perceptions with work outcomes (stress, job satisfaction and job performance). A sample consisting of 250 employees welfare was chosen using random simple sampling and Morgan Table. The present study was based on the practical purpose and descriptive method. The data were gathered through Ferris and Kacmar standard questionnaires of politics perceptions, Brayfield and Roths job satisfaction, Paterson job performance, House and Rizzo stress and Eisenberger and et al perceived support. The results showed that organizational politics perceptions bear a positive and significant relationship with job stress. The results also showed that the relationship between organizational politics perceptions and stress, job satisfaction and job performance is mediated through perceived organizational support. In the concerned model all regressive weights – except the relationship between politics perceptions and job satisfaction and job performance – were statistically significant.

Keywords: Job, Organizational, Politics, Support

Introduction

People spend at least one third of their lives in the organizations. Thus, we have delivered the control of one third of our lifetime to the others and have been affected by complex authority relationship. From the other hand, knowledge of power and politics is a fact in the organizational life that cannot be ignored.

Thus, for identifying organizational behavior, the only way is determining power and politics [1]. Undoubtedly, domestic policies are prevalent in any organization but there is little knowledge about such policies [2].

Researches on organizational policies have shown that policies are important in work places and need more studies [2].

From political view, organization is a complex system made of people and coalitions with special interests, beliefs, values, and expectations. These coalitions compete for acquiring scarce organizational resources all the time. Contrast and conflict are inevitable. Thus, power, politics, and influence are important permanent facts in organizational life [1].

Negative or positive actions which are not considered as a part of a job and the organization does not consider them legal, formally called political behaviors. These behaviors form in the case of the lack of behavioral rules or decision-making and limitation of organizational resources [3]. Speaking about authority and politics, a negative image is created in the minds of many people [4]. Perceiving organizational politics shows the degree of which the staff see their work place as a political environment in which people try to exceed their own interests; thus, this place seems unfair personally [2]. Perception of organizational policies is the result of interpreting others' behaviors and organizational events by the preceptor and can be either positive or negative [5]. Kacmar and Baron believe that negative consequences in perceiving politics have been supported empirically for a long time [6]. However, what most studies lacked it is experimental evidences of why such relationships and results exist. Theoretical studies in this regard show mediation of the relationship between perceiving politics and work results [7]. Professional views have noted the importance for all organizations which seek exact information about work results of their staff [8]. Here, the relationship between organizational politics and their consequences is important since every member has some power that he/she uses for his/her own interests. Unfortunately, studies on Perceived Organizational Politics are limited. In Iran, except for few studies (Hadavi et al. [10], and Rahmanseresht and Fayazi [1]), there are not enough works. Studies of Vigoda and Cohen [2], Ferris and Kacmar [3], Poon [11], and Wilson [12] found a significant correlation between Perceived Organizational Politics and their consequences. While some studies found

the opposite results [1]. One reason for such conflicting results is related to not considering mediating variables in the relationship between political perceptions and professional consequences. As Rahmanseresht and Fayazi found, in Iran, managers and staff do not have positive attitudes towards the topics like this and even fear them. Thus, examining mediating variables in the relationships between Perceived Organizational Politics and their consequences, satisfaction, performance and stress have been considered as important factors in work environment and have been examined in many studies [13]. But, there is a gap in this regard in Iran. One factor that affects organizational behaviors is job satisfaction [9]. Ferris et al. found that political atmosphere increases work limitation and decreases job satisfaction [14]. Vigoda and Cohen concluded that Perceived Organizational Politics and job satisfaction have negative correlation [2]. Ferris and Kacmar found that Perceived Organizational Politics leads to job satisfaction [3]. Job performance is one effective factor in the organization [15, 16]. Improving mental hygiene in work place is also important for developing human resources in the organization [17].

When stress occurs, enjoyment feeling does not happen for the person [18]. Stress is poison for human resources and the staff are vulnerable to stress [16].

In one classification, political factors like insufficient personal cooperation in determining one's destiny, the lack of feeling secure about properties and beliefs, and feeling pressure about independence and liberty are stressful factors. Studies by Ferris and Kacmar [3] and Poon [11] found a positive and significant correlation between politics perceptions, stress, anxiety, mental stress, and tension.

Perception is a process which people exert to organize and interpret their sensational receipts [10]. The idea of perceived organizational support was introduced by Eizenberger et al. [19]; it is supporting

general beliefs of the staff about general value span that the organization offers for the role, share, and welfare of the staff [8]. This theory suggests that the staff create beliefs about the degree to which the organization supports their needs and values, based on the interaction with organizational agents, supervisors and managers [20].

A trend of studies shows that perceived organizational support is related to work results of the staff, connecting them to job satisfaction, performance, commitment, organizational citizenship behavior, and the decrease of job dropout [21].

Shakerinia and Nabavi [9], Rhoades and Eisenberger [20], Shanock and Eisenberger [22] have examined the relationship between perceived organizational support, personal, professional, and organizational variables [8]. Mediating role of perceived organizational

support has been regarded by researchers such as Hachvarter et al who confirmed the mediating role of it in the relationship of Perceived Organizational Policies and emotional commitment, satisfaction, tention, and job performance [7]. Rodes et al [20] found that perceived organizational support is the mediator of the relationship between organizational rewards, procedural justice, supervisor' s support and commitment [23]. Since no domestic study was found in this regard, such a study seems necessary in Iran. What distinguishes this study from the others is considering staff perception from organizational policies as independent variable and stress, job satisfaction and performance as dependent variable with mediating role of perceived organizational support in Iran. Conceptual model of the study is shown in Fig.1.

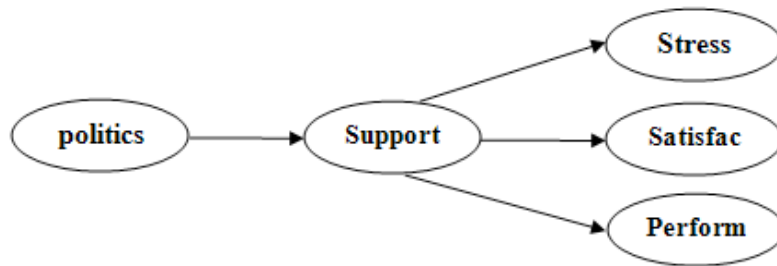


Figure 1 The conceptual model of the study

Method

This study aims to identify casual relationships between perceived organizational policies and its professional and personal consequences (satisfaction, job performance, and stress). Thus, it uses descriptive methods for applied goals. To analyze variables, structural equation modeling was used. Staff perception from organizational policies was independent variable and stress, job satisfaction and performance were dependent variable with mediating role of Perceived Organizational Support. Statistical population included 250 staff of Welfare Department of Western Azerbaijan. To select sample, simple random sampling method and Morgan Table were used and the sample size of 152 people was achieved. 150 questionnaires were used and analyzed. To gather data, 5 standard questionnaires were

used as follows.

Questionnaire of organizational politics perceptions: For measuring organizational politics perceptions, Ferris and Kacmar Questionnaire was used. This questionnaire included 6 questions with 5-point likert scale. Consistency and validity of this tool was confirmed (Ghasemzadeh et al. [24], Hassani and Tima [25]).

Questionnaire of perceived organizational support: based on the study of Eisenberger et al. this questionnaire was selected. This questionnaire included 6 questions with 5-point likert scale (1. Quite disagreed, 5. Quite agreed). It was translated by Samani and Golparvar and its consistency and validity was confirmed.

Questionnaire of job satisfaction: to evaluate job satisfaction of the staff, 5-question

Questionnaire of Brifield and Roots in 1951 was used. Chronbach alpha of this questionnaire was achieved to be 0.9 in the study of Hall et al. [27].

Questionnaire of job performance: 15-question Questionnaire of job performance was provided by Paterson. It had 5-point likert scale. Consistency and validity of this tool was confirmed [24].

Questionnaire of job stress: Job stress was measured using a 6-question tool provided by House and Rizzo. It had 5-point likert scale. (1. Quite disagreed, 5. Quite agreed). Consistency and validity of this tool was confirmed [24].

To estimate reliability coefficient of the questionnaires, Chronbach Alpha was used. Alpha values for the questionnaires of

politics, support, stress, satisfaction, and job performance were 0.70, 0.71, 0.70, 0.73, and 0.74, respectively. Thus, all questionnaires had high consistency.

Data were analyzed in several steps. To test questionnaires' validity, factor analysis was exerted. For testing their validity, confirmatory factor analysis was also utilized. In this study, 5 models were defined. Based on Table 1, in all cases the statistics of X2, DF, GFI, AGFI, CFI, and NFI in 5-factor model had values of 236.99, 88, 0.125, 0.85, 0.85, and 0.84.. RMSEA had a value of 0.045. Since all these values were close to 1, they revealed maximum fitness of 5-factor model. Their results have been shown in Table 1 and Fig.2.

Confirmatory factor analysis: To analyze

Table 1 Index for model fitness

Model	Df	X2	X2/df	AGFI	GFI	CFI	RMSEA
One factor	135	746.5	5.5	0.57	0.66	0.43	0.16
Two factor	134	598.2	4.6	0.63	0.71	0.5	0.14
Three factor	132	415.1	3.14	0.72	0.78	0.68	0.11
five factor	125	236.99	1.9	0.81	0.86	0.84	0/45

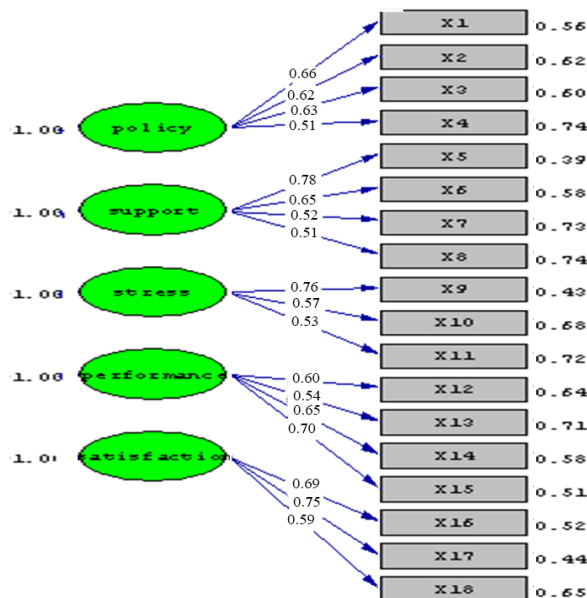


Figure 2 The factor loads of the questions related to the constructs of the study

the relationship between latent and observable variables, structural equation modeling was used.

Results

Table 2 shows the means and standard deviations of the staff's score for each research variables. Correlation between research variables is shown in Table 3. Except

the correlation between politics, satisfaction and job performance, the correlation of other variables were significant. Based on the correlation analysis, any increase in the politics' scores leads to the decrease of the feeling of organizational support, job satisfaction and performance and enhances the scores of job stress among the staff. While, any increase in

the scores of organizational support decreases stress and enhanced job satisfaction and performance.

Table 2 *Descriptive statistics*

Index	Policy	Suport	Stress	Satisfaction	Performance
Mean	3.25	2.93	3.3	3.20	3.75
SD	0.87	0.83	0.97	0.97	0.75

Table 3 *Correlation between research variables*

Variable	Policy	Suport	Stress	Satisfaction	Performance
Policy	1				
Suport	-.20**	1			
Stress	.24**	-.18*	1		
Satisfaction	-.11	.27**	.45**	1	
Performance	-.12	.19*	.28**	.39**	1

* P< 0.05, **P< 0.01

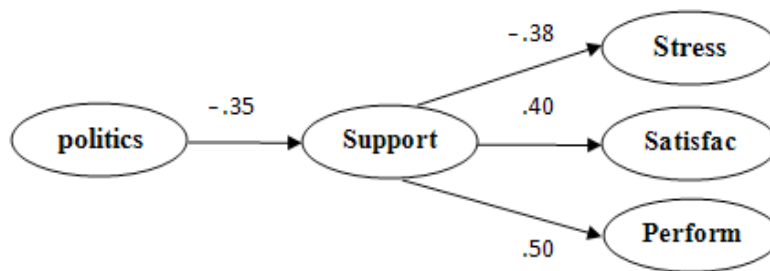


Figure 3 *Pattern of structural function after data fitness with supposed pattern*

Pearson's correlation coefficient at significance level of 0.05

As seen in software outputs from standard deviations Figure1 and significance values of path analysis Table 4, model fitness was confirmed and all coefficients were significant. Politics had a negative and significant effect on perceived support with the coefficient of -0.35. Support had negative and significant effect on job stress with the coefficient of -0.38. Thus, mediating role of support in relation with politics and job stress was confirmed. Then, politics had an indirect and significant effect on job stress with the coefficient of 0.13. Based on correlation results, politics increases job stress scores. Thus, with mediation of support, negative effect of politics on job stress decreases. In other words, people with high organizational politics perceptions showed low stress in the condition of high organizational support.

Support has direct, positive, and significant effect on job satisfaction with the coefficient of 0.40. Thus, mediating role of perceived support in the relationship of politics and job stress in the model was confirmed. Thus, politics had a direct and significant effect on job satisfaction with the coefficient of 0.14. Politics had negative and significant effect on perceived support with the coefficient of 0.35. Also, support had a direct and significant effect on job performance with the coefficient of 0.50. Thus, mediating role of perceived support in the relationship of politics and job performance in the model is confirmed. Thus, politics has an indirect and significant effect on job satisfaction with the coefficient of 0.18. In other words, the negative effect of organizational politics on job performance of the staff decreased with mediation of perceived support.

Table 4 Coefficient effect of policy on stress, satisfaction and performance through perceived support

Hypotheses path		Standard path coefficient	t	Result
Policy	suport	-0.35	-2.02	Direct effect
Support	stress	-0.38	-2.09	Direct effect
Support	satisfaction	0.40	2.40	Direct effect
Support	performance	-0.50	3.40	Direct effect
Policy (through suport)	stress	-0.13	-	Indirect effect
Policy (through suport)	satisfaction	-0.14	-	No indirect effect
Policy (through suport)	performance	-0.18	-	Indirect effect

df = 128, X²/df = 2 , RMSEA = .07, CFI = .82 , GFI = .85

Discussion

Some researchers such as Hachwarter et al. [7] and Hadavineghad et al. [10] have examined different mediating variables in studying politics perceptions and its consequences separately. But, this is the first study that examines the mediating role of perceived support in the relationship between organizational politics perception and its consequences. It was found that staff perception from organizational politics has a positive correlation with job stress implying the staff with higher perception from organizational politics show higher stresses in their jobs. This finding agrees with previous studies of Ferris and Kacmar [3] and Poon [11]. Politics perception leads to undesirable results, since the trust of the organization towards staff cooperation disappears in an environment full of politics. Moreover, Politics perception has the potential of developing hesitation and negative reactions in the staff towards organizational motivations for the support of mental safety and welfare [7]. because of complexing facts, organizational politics play an important role in forming attitudes and next behaviors [28] with negative effects on mental states of the staff [26]. In one classification, political factors such as undefinite personal cooperation in determining one’ s destiny, not feeling secure about the life, properties, and beliefs, pressure about liberty and independence have been introduced as stressors [16]. Thus, as a strong stressor, organizational structure gives more decision-

making power to the staff and the staff gain more cooperation in determining their own destiny. Also, in political contexts, conflicts among the staff for scarce resources lead to people’s competition against each other [2]. Thus, the low quality of interpersonal relations in the political space of work place leads to unsecure feeling of the staff, increasing their stress. Thus, managers should find ways for reducing staff stress in work places to remove negative consequences of political behaviors in the organization. Since there is no comprehensive solution for removing stress, one way can be inviting consultants for offering probable solutions for improving work environment and stress management. Data analysis showed a negative correlation between perceived organizational politics and job satisfaction. Thus, the staff with higher perception of organizational politics showed low satisfaction of their jobs. This result agrees with the findings of Vigoda and Cohen [2], Ferris et al. [14], and Ferris and Kekmer [3] on job satisfaction, and with the works of Rahmanseresht and Fayazi [1], Vigoda and Cohen [2], and Wilson [12] on job performance. As the predictor of organizational politics perception, job satisfaction is important. Thus, high organizational politics perception may be the consequence of negative work attitudes such as low job satisfaction [2].

Based on Ferris et al, a political environment can increase work limitation and decrease job satisfaction [14]. According to the political theory of the organization, political behaviors of the managers that appear as different political tactics are to the benefit of managers, reducing staff benefits [10]. Thus, the staff capabilities in ambiguous work places under the effect of political behaviors of the managers are limited and long-term performance of the organization is negatively affected. This result agreed with Hachvarter et al who found that an environment full of political activities tend to increase worsening the relationship between the performance and reward [29].

Results confirmed mediating role of Perceived Support in the relationship between politics and job stress, satisfaction, and performance. Accordingly, when politics increases the scores of job stress with mediation of support, negative effect of politics on stress decreases. Based on these results, Perceived Support mediated the negative correlation of organizational politics and job satisfaction and performance. This result was consistent with Hachwarter et al. [7]. When organizational support perception is pervasive, staff come to this belief that good work has good rewards and this leads to the continuance of positive behaviors and positive work consequences. According to Vigoda and Cohen [2], the employees who achieve their goals and interests and feel that their expectations have been met, they perceive trust and support and feel more closeness with their organizations; therefore, they perceive the organizations less political; it means that when person- organization fit between an individual and the organization is manifested and expectations are met, the person feels that has equal opportunities regarding meeting necessary interests in his workplace. Thus, the staff improve the organization and positive work results [2].

According to the results, a positive and significant correlation was found between Perceived Organizational Support and job performance and satisfaction. This result is consistent with Hachwarter et al. [7], Shakerinia

and Nabavi [9], Shanock and Eisenberger [22]. Mearns and Reader believe that high levels of organizational support reflects management concerns about the welfare of the staff, creating mutual relationship between them [32]. In that condition, the staff feel more loyalty towards the organization and gain more productivity and better performance [9]. Positive correlation between Perceived Organizational Support and work results may come from emotional resources offered by work context [21]. When the staff feel received supports from the organization desirably, they are likely to offer useful services which improve their organizational performance [33]. Shanock and Eisenberger showed that seniors who feel support from the organization have more supportive behaviors towards juniors and these people have better job performances [22].

Results of studying satisfaction agreed with Shakerinia and Nabavi [9] and Noorbaksh and Mirnaderi. They found a positive and significant correlation between the context of schools and job satisfaction of teachers [34]. Researches of Rehovades and Eizenberg showed that increasing organizational support results in more feeling of belonging in the people towards their organizations and enhances their job satisfaction [20].

Data analysis showed a negative and significant correlation between perceived organizational support and job stress. Although there is no direct study in this regard, in a similar study, Hachwarter et al reported a significant correlation between Perceived Organizational Support and job stress [7]. Rohodas and Eisenberger found that undesirable work conditions (i.e. stressors) have a negative correlation with Perceived Organizational Support [20]. Asgari and Nekelzadeh showed that people who get more support and less stress at work have better performance and higher satisfaction. [18]. Mohammadzadeh et al found that interorganizational factors create stress and the lack of organizational support is an important stressor in the organization [35]. No empirical study was found for this

result. But, this is a reasonable result. The more the staff feel support at work, the more their stresses decrease. Soleimani et al has confirmed this result. They believed that one job stressor is personal factors formed based on the feelings, experiences, and beliefs of the people from their own behaviors and others at work. Here, the perception of people from dominant ethics in group behavior is more effective than other factors [36]. This study has limitations. Statistical population and the place of this study is limited to the staff of Welfare Department in Orumieh. So, generalizing its results to the other organizations should be with caution.

Conclusion

Organizational Perceived Policies are common in any organization. Managers cannot and should not remove them. Thus, managers should care about political space of the organization and staff perceptions from them, keeping them balanced. They should prevent from negative aspects of political behaviors in the organization. They should keep these policies in a reasonable zone. Organizational support is not merely limited to material elements. Spiritual supports can also improve organizational support's perceptions. These items can be examined in future studies.

Contributions

Study design: HM, GHA

Data collection and analysis: BS, GHA

Manuscript preparation: MSH, HM

Conflict of interest

"The authors declare that they have no competing interests."

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