

Multidimensional Organizational Politics- Employee Engagement Relationship: The Role of Political Skill

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This study explores the relationship between multidimensional perception of organizational politics (POP) and employee engagement (EE), and how multidimensional political skill (PSKILL) moderates the relationship. 800 employees, drawn from three private sector organizations in Lagos, Nigeria, participated in the cross-sectional study. Two dimensions of POP were negatively related to EE while one was not. Three dimensions of PSKILL interacted with the significant POP dimensions to reduce the negative effects of POP on EE. The results highlight the need to utilize multidimensional POP and PSKILL in studies, and the need for engaged employees to possess political skill if they must be effective. Hence, organizations must encourage the development of PSKILL by engaged employees.

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Multidimensional Organizational Politics

COVID-19 work demands have further enhanced the importance of employee engagement in driving individual and organizational productivity since engaged employees are valuable in volatile and uncertain business environments due to their creativity, innovativeness, and proclivity to seek new ways of enhancing productivity (Hickman & Robison, 2020). The two critical success factors required by engaged employees are: the ability to maneuver in various organizational climates and the interpersonal skills required to secure buy-in for new ways of doing things from other organizational participants (Martin et al., 2013). Perception of organizational politics (POP) is an aspect of organizational climate that is ubiquitous and unavoidable, and since political maneuvering is constantly involved in the acquisition and maintenance of organizational resources, engaged employees cannot afford to be indifferent about organizational politics (Amah, 2016).

Past Studies

Past studies that used negatively connoted single-dimensional POP obtained inconsistent relationship between POP and work outcomes. For example, while Jain and Ansari (2018) obtained negative results, Opoku and Arthur (2018) obtained positive result and Landells and Albrecht (2019) did not establish a significant relationship. This inconsistency may be from three reasons. The first is that past studies utilized one-dimensional POP which may have confounded the results obtained (Guo et al., 2019; Yusof et al., 2018). Each dimension of POP deals with a different aspect of POP such that combining them will confound the results obtained. For example, a dimension of POP deals with individuals refusing to make contribution to organizational issues for fear of negative consequences, while another deals with politics in pay and promotion decisions. The second source may be the absence of boundary conditions capable of moderating the effects of POP on individual and organizational outcomes (Javed et al., 2014; Yusof et al., 2018). Meanwhile, existing studies have recognized organizational work climate, individual differences, and personal resources as boundary variables that may moderate relationship between POP and individual outcomes (Landells & Albrecht, 2019). Since political skill is needed by engaged employees to develop and manage networks in a political environment, the third possible source of inconsistent results is the use of single-dimensional political skill which could mask the real effects of a four-dimensional political skill since its dimensions

may have different moderating effects on different dimensions of POP. For example, the interpersonal influence dimension may affect the POP dimension dealing with politics in pay and promotion decision, but not on that dealing with refusal to speak out on organizational issues. Thus, including a three-dimensional POP and a four-dimensional PSKILL in the study is worthwhile to test the four dimensions of political skill (Kacmar et al., 2013). It is worthy of note that most studies involving PSKILL have been performed in the context of stress and not employee engagement and utilized composite measures of POP and PSKILL (De Clercq & Balausteguigoitia, 2019).

Present Study

The current study addresses two gaps in past POP and EE research. First, it establishes how three-dimensional POP affects EE, an important individual attitudinal behavior useful to organizations (Yusof et al., 2018). Second, it establishes how PSKILL, an important personal resource, moderates the relationship between POP and EE (Chang et al., 2009). Thus, the current study contributes to understanding the specific effects of the POP dimensions and the search for the antecedents of EE which have hitherto been limited to single-dimensioned POP and dispositional antecedents (Coper-Thomas et al., 2018). The study also contributes to establishing PSKILL as an important personal resource which engaged employees can use to maneuver through political environments while maintaining high engagement. It is argued in the current study that since EE is a goal-directed intrinsic motivational

variable, employees are engaged when the right climate is created, and they can deal with challenges effectively. For instance, Kahn and Fellows (2013:105) stated that in engagement, employees make “choices about how much real selves they would bring into and use to inform their role performance”.

Theoretical Foundation & Hypotheses

The conservation of resources theory (COR) drives relationships in this study. The COR theory as initially propounded by Hobfoll (1989) addresses how individuals handle their physical, social, and environmental demands using a continuous stock of valued personal and organizational resources. Over time, scholars and researchers have used the COR as a framework for studying how engaged employees obtain and maintain a continuous stock of personal and organizational resources to avoid the burnout associated with high work involvement (Amah, 2016). COR advocates that individuals get stressed only when there is “threat or actual loss of resources or lack of expected gain in resources” (Amah, 2016, p. 122). Hence, individuals will always strive to maintain valued resources to avoid the negative effects of the stressors. Valued resources come in various forms and are categorized as job, organizational, and personal resources (Grandey & Cropanzano, 1999).

Organizational politics has been recognized as an environmental stressor which affects employee functioning because of the uncertainty and ambiguity

associated with such an environment (Ferris & King, 1991). In such an environment resources are drained in working through the environment. However, PSKILL is a critical personal resource that is important to engaged employees as they maneuver through political environments and retain effectiveness. According to COR, PSKILL provides additional resources to employees as they maneuver through the stressful environment created by organizational politics.

Perception of Organizational Politics

The study of organizational politics is necessary for three reasons. Firstly, it is prevalent among organizational participants. Secondly, the power and influence possessed by organizational members and how they are deployed makes it imperative to study the link between organizational politics and behavioral outcomes. Thirdly, the study of organizational politics is necessary since past scholars have argued that an organization’s political environment has a strong impact on employee behaviors (Landells & Albrecht, 2017). Kacmar and Ferris (1991) identified three dimensions of POP, namely, general political behavior (GPB) in which individuals enact self-serving behaviors to obtain desired and valued outcomes; go along to get ahead (GAGA) where individuals do not make valuable contribution to organizational issues since speaking out is detrimental to receiving valued outcomes; and pay and promotion policies (PPR) in which politics is involved in the enactment of pay and promotion policies.

Organizational politics has been described as a double-edged sword which can be beneficial or detrimental to organizational participants based on whether it is perceived as threatening or otherwise (Harris et al., 2016). How POP is viewed is linked to the cognitive appraisal of an individual which in turn will affect whether the individual sees it as positive or negative. Cognitive appraisal is affected by the number of resources possessed by the individual which can help the individual to maneuver through political environments. Hence, when engaged employees have the right environment, they can release more of themselves to their assigned roles.

Political Skill

Political skill is defined as the “human potential to effectually comprehend organizational members and employ such knowledge and potential in influencing others to act towards improving one’s personal and/or organizational aims” (Ferris et al, 2005: 127). PSKILL helps individuals to understand people, their social environment, and how best to deploy these to strategically achieve identified goals. Ferris et al. (2007) identified four major dimensions of political skill, namely, social astuteness, interpersonal influence, networking ability, and apparent sincerity. Despite this, PSKILL has been studied as a single-dimensional construct (Blickle et al., 2011).

Social astuteness helps individuals understand and adapt to various social environments and use such understanding to their advantage. Interpersonal abil-

ity helps individuals to adopt various influence tactics to control relationships to their advantage. Individuals with high networking ability build and maintain relevant networks which they can use in implementing desired plans. Those with apparent sincerity possess high integrity and genuineness; and they are honest, forthright, and always willing to help others (Ferris et al., 2005).

Employees with high PSKILL will find a dense political climate conducive to effectively utilize their skills for both personal and organizational goal achievement.

Individuals with high PSKILL are aware of the power of perception and so they control how others perceive their actions. PSKILL is linked to many individual outcomes (Blickle et al., 2011). When people have the PSKILL to understand and analyze their social environment and use such knowledge to manage networks, they are likely to perceive the political environment as positive. Hence, employees with high PSKILL will find a dense political climate conducive to effectively utilize their skills for both personal and organizational goal achievement.

Employee Engagement

Engaged employees immerse themselves in assigned roles (Kahn, 1990), and they are sources of competitive advantage for their organizations (Kuntz & Roberts, 2014). Components of employee engagement include vigor (level of en-

ergy applied), dedication (level of involvement in assigned roles), and absorption (how engrossed such a person is in assigned roles). Previous researchers have found a positive relationship between an engaging environment and improved employee productivity and retention, increased job satisfaction, achievement of organizational objectives, and maximization of shareholders' wealth (Kuntz & Roberts, 2014). In an environment of high GPB, individuals are involved in self-serving behaviors, and in high PPR politics is involved in determining pay. These environments are highly stressful to those who cannot maneuver through them because of the high demand on personal resources. According to COR, unless the individual can provide the resources needed to get past the high demands in these environments, stress will occur, and the individuals will attempt to moderate the demands by reducing their engagement. In high GAGA individuals do not speak out for fear of detrimental effects to the receipt of valued work outcome. However, employee voice is a major identity for engaged employees and so it is unlikely that they will feel stressed in an environment of high GAGA since, according to self-identity theory, individuals will always act to protect their self-identity. Hence, it is likely that GAGA will not affect the level of EE. Differential effects of the dimensions of POP have been established by past studies (Ugwu & Onyishi, 2013). Hence, the following hypotheses are stated:

H1. PPR dimension of POP is negatively related to employee engagement.

H2. GAGA dimension of POP is not related to employee engagement.

H3. GPB dimension of POP is negatively related to employee engagement.

The Moderating Role of PSKILL

In a political environment, PSKILL constitutes a major resource for attention, activation and energy mobilization by engaged employees (Kane-frieder et al, 2014). Social astuteness helps individuals to adopt to political environment, interpersonal skill helps in the use of different influence tactics to maneuver a stressful environment, networking ability helps in building necessary network to withstand stress, and apparent sincerity shows that people have high integrity and can help others. Consequently, since the first three dimensions of PSKILL help the individual to maneuver through stressful environment they are likely to interact PPR and GPB dimensions of POP to affect EE. However, the apparent sincerity dimension of PSKILL will likely not provide resources needed to handle any of the stress arising from the POP dimension. Hence, based on the COR concept, engaged employees need to develop the social astuteness, interpersonal and networking skill required to maneu-

Engaged employees need to develop the social astuteness, interpersonal and networking skill required to maneuver through stressful environments created by the two dimensions of POP.

ver through stressful environments created by the two dimensions of POP, otherwise they face the danger of minimizing engagement. Since apparent sincerity cannot provide the resources needed in the POP dimensions, it cannot provide buffer effect to individuals. Hence, the following hypothesis is stipulated:

H4. Social astuteness will moderate the relationship between the dimensions of POP (GPB, PPR) and employee engagement, such that high value of the social astuteness will reduce the negative effects of the dimensions of POP on employee engagement.

H5. Interpersonal skill will moderate the relationship between the dimensions of POP (GPB, PPR) and employee en-

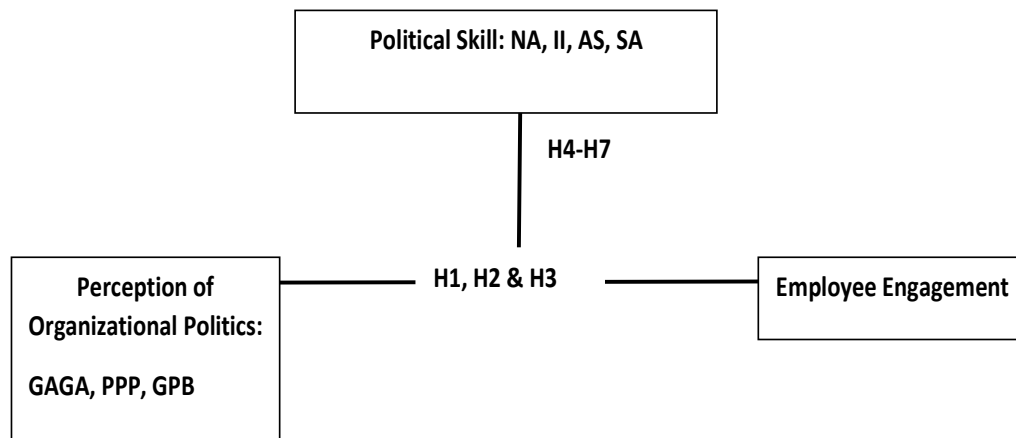
gagement, such that high value of the social astuteness will reduce the negative effects of the dimensions of POP on employee engagement.

H6. Networking skill will moderate the relationship between the dimensions of POP (GPB, PPR) and employee engagement, such that high value of the social astuteness will reduce the negative effects of the dimensions of POP on employee engagement.

H.7 Apparent sincerity will not moderate the relationship between the dimensions of POP (GPB, PPR) and employee engagement, such that negative effects of the dimensions of POP on employee engagement will remain unchanged.

The model tested is in fig. 1

Fig. 1 Conceptual Model



NA: Networking; SA: Social astuteness; AS: Apparent sincerity; II: Interpersonal influence; GAGA, Go along to get ahead; PPR, Pay & promotion; GPB, General political behavior

Methodology

Participants came from three private organizations in the banking, manufacturing, and real estate sectors. The researcher got access to the phone directories of the participating organizations and utilized the same to generate the list of participating employees. Apart from issuing the phone directories, agents of the participating organizations were not directly involved in the exercise. The questionnaires were sent directly to the participating employees in sealed envelopes, and they were returned to the researcher in sealed envelopes. Part one of the questionnaire contained the purpose of the study and assurance of the confidentiality of supplied data and that results would be issued in a format that would not identify participants. The demographic variables of the participants were in part two of the questionnaire, while part three contained the items that measured the study variables.

1200 questionnaires were sent out to the participating employees of the three organizations. However, only eight hundred usable questionnaires were used (67% return rate). 258 participants came from the first organization (return rate, 65%), 267 participants came from the second organization (return rate, 67%), and 275 participants came from the third organization (return rate, 69%). Participants consisted of 77% males, average age of 36.85 years (SD= 8.15), average tenure of 12.5 years (SD=4.25), were mainly bachelor's degree holders (65%), and mainly married (56%).

Measures

Likert-type 7-point scales (1= *strongly disagree* and 7= *strongly agree*) were used in all the measures. Previously validated measures were used in the study.

Political skill: The measure was adopted from the work of Ferris et al. (2005) and contains eighteen items that capture the four dimensions of PSKILL. Example item for networking (NA) is "I spend a lot of time and effort at work networking with others." Example item for interpersonal influence (II) is "I am able to make most people feel comfortable and at ease around me." Example item for social astuteness (SA) is "I am particularly good at sensing the motivations and hidden agendas of others." Example item for apparent sincerity is "When communicating with others, I try to be genuine in what I say and do." Cronbach alpha obtained in the study for NA, II, SA and AS are .71, .81, .78, and .70 respectively.

Perception of organizational politics: The measure was adopted from the work of Kacmar and Carlson (1997). The scale contains fifteen items representing the three dimensions of POP, namely general political behavior (GPB), go along to get ahead (GAGA), and pay and promotion (PPR). Example item for GPB is "People in this organization attempt to build themselves up by tearing others down." Example item for GAGA is "Agreeing with powerful others is the best alternative in this organization," while that of PPR is "None of the raises

I have received are consistent with the policies on how raises should be determined.” Cronbach alpha obtained in this study are .71, .72 and .83 for GPB, GAGA, and PPR, respectively.

Employee engagement: The measure was taken from the work of Seppala et al. (2009) and contains eight items. Example item is “At work I feel strong and vigorous.” The Cronbach alpha obtained in this study is .86.

Control variables: Past studies have shown that EE varies with gender, age, marital status, type of organization, and tenure (Rai, 2018). Consequently, the current study controlled for these variables.

Preliminary Statistical Analysis

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 25) and the Analysis of

Moment of Structures (AMOS 25) were used for the statistical analysis. The fit of the model was gauged with goodness of fit index (GFI), comparative fit index (CFI), and root mean standard error of approximation (RMSEA). The fit of any model is acceptable when the values of GFI and CFI are at least 0.9, and RMSEA falls between 0.05 and 0.08 (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Rotated exploratory factors analysis indicated that the items of POP loaded on three factors. Hence, confirmatory factor analysis was carried out to confirm the factor structure. 3-factor and 1-factor models were tested. Results indicated that the 3-factor model has better fit indices of χ^2 (29, N=800) = 50.36, $p = .06$; $\chi^2/df = 1.737$; GFI = 0.96; CFI = 0.97; RMSEA = .056 (Table 1). Similarly, CFA was carried out on the PSKILL items to ascertain four factors as recorded in Ferris et al. (2005). Table 2 shows that a 4-factor model has the best fit of χ^2 (14, N=800) = 22.35, $p =$

Table 1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Perception of Organizational Politics

Factor models	χ^2	df	$\Delta\chi^2$	χ^2/df	GFI	CFI	RMSEA
One factor	76.36	31	-	2.46	0.94	0.94	0.08
Three factors	50.36	29	26**	1.74	0.96	.97	0.06

GFI: Goodness of Fit Index; CFI: Comparative Fit Index; RMSEA: Root Mean Standard Error of Approximation.

** $p < .01$

Table 2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Political Skill

Factor models	χ^2	Df	$\Delta\chi^2$	χ^2/df	GFI	CFI	RMSEA
4 factors	22.350	14	-	1.596	0.98	0.99	0.051
Three factors (NA, SA+AS, II)	35.470	17	13.12**	2.086	0.96	0.98	0.068
Three factors (NA, AS+II, SA)	69.542	17	47.192***	4.091	0.92	0.93	.115
1 Factor	117.108	20	94.758***	5.855	0.88	0.87	.114

NA: Networking; SA: Social astuteness; AS: Apparent sincerity; II: Interpersonal influence; GFI: Goodness of Fit Index; CFI: Comparative Fit Index; RMSEA: Root Mean Standard Error of Approximation.

** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

.06; $\chi^2/df = 1.596$; GFI = 0.98; CFI = 0.99; RMSEA = .051. The standardized values of the variables were used for the calculation of the interaction terms (Foucreault et al., 2018).

Common method variance: Three methods were used to ascertain the level of common method variance in the study. The first was the use of unrotated exploratory factor analysis which yielded five factors. The first factor in the unrotated factor analysis accounted for 20% of the variance, compared to 78% variance for all the factors. This is an acceptable common method variance level (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). The second method was confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) where 8-factors and 1-

factor models were tested. Results indicated that the 8-factors model had a better fit index ($\chi^2(175, N=625) = 279.66, p=.07; \chi^2/df = 1.598; GFI = 0.90; CFI = 0.94; RMSEA = .051$) (Table 3).

A common factor was included in the 8-factors model in the third method. The loadings of all the items on the common factor were constrained to be equal, while the variance for the common factor was also constrained to be one (Eichhorn, 2014). Result showed that the constrained loading of all the items was .46 which translates in to a common method variance of 21% which is below the threshold point of 50% (Eichhorn, 2014). These tests indicate that the estimates obtained in the study were not badly affected by common method variance.

Table 3 Confirmatory Factor Analysis for the Study Variables

Model	χ^2	df	$\Delta\chi^2$	χ^2/df	GFI	CFI	RMSEA
8 Factor (items loaded on their factors)	279.66	175	-	1.598	0.90	0.94	0.05
1 Factor (items loaded on a single factor)	1037.64	185	757.98**	5.609	0.61	0.54	0.14

GFI: Goodness of Fit Index; CFI: Comparative Fit Index; RMSEA: Root Mean Standard Error of Approximation.

** $p < .01$

Construct, convergent, and discriminant validity: A factor has acceptable construct validity when loadings of its items are each above 0.5 (Hair et al., 2010), and has acceptable convergent validity when additionally, the reliability is above 0.7 (Nunnally, 1978), and the average variance extracted exceeds 0.5 (Hair et al., 2010). These conditions are satisfied as indi-

cated in Table 4. For a factor to achieve acceptable discriminant validity, Koufteros et al. (2002) recommend that the average variance extracted by the factor must exceed the variance of the factor shares with other factors. Evidence of discriminant validity is demonstrated by each diagonal element being greater than the vertical and horizontal off-diagonal elements (Table 5).

Table 4 Convergent Validity

Variable	Range of item loadings on factors	Average variance extracted	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability
GAGA	0.62–0.72	0.58	0.72	0.73
PPR	0.70-0.81	0.62	0.83	0.89
GPB	0.73-0.84	0.62	0.71	0.82
Networking	0.71-0.77	0.54	0.71	0.80
Interpersonal influence	0.80-0.85	0.68	0.81	0.78
Social astuteness	0.80-0.66	0.54	0.78	0.72
Apparent sincerity	0.78-0.82	0.64	0.70	0.82
Employee engagement	0.70–0.77	0.54	0.86	0.67

GAGA, Go along to get ahead; PPR, Pay & promotion; GPB, General political behavior.

Table 5 Discriminant Validity

Study variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Go along to get ahead	0.58†							
2. Pay and promotion	0.25	0.62†						
3. General political behavior	0.28	0.20	0.62†					
4. Networking	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.54†				
5. Interpersonal influence	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.24	0.68†			
6. Social astuteness	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.20	0.38	0.54†		
7. Apparent sincerity	0.07	0.01	0.03	0.24	0.26	0.42	0.64†	
8. Employee engagement	0.34	0.02	0.02	0.34	0.20	0.30	0.28	0.54†

†The average variance extracted, and all other entries are squared correlation matrix.

Results

The correlations, mean, standard deviation, and Cronbach reliability of the study variables are shown in Table 6. The significant correlations indicate support for some hypotheses. The results of the hierarchical regression are in Table 7. After controlling for the demographic and type of organization variables, EE is positively related to PPR ($\beta=-.15, t=2.32, p=.04$), and GPB ($\beta=-.22, t=4.056, p=.035$) is not related to GAGA ($\beta=-.11, t=.86, p=.39$). Hence, H1 and H3 are supported, while H2 is not supported. The interaction terms NA* PPR is significant ($\beta=-.18, t=3.245, p=.05$), NA*GPB is significant ($\beta=.22, t=6.456, p=.01$), Π *GPB ($\beta=-.20, t=5.567,$

$p=.05$), and SA*PPR ($\beta=-.19, t=3.678, p=.05$). Hence, H4 is partially supported. The significant interaction terms accounted for an additional 16% variance in EE.

To interpret the significant interaction terms, the method recommended by Aiken and West (1991) was adopted. Participants were divided into the low (mean – 1 SD), and high (mean + 1 SD) values of the dimensions of PSKILL. Separate regression analyses were run for each group of participants. Figures 2 to 5 indicate that for high values of the PSKILL dimensions, POP was less negatively related to EE, while for low values, the negative relationship between EE and POP was more pronounced.

Table 6 Means, Standard Deviations, Reliability Coefficient and Correlations

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1.Tenure														
2.Gender			.05											
3.Age			.43**	-.01										
4.MS			.29**	.04	.55**									
5.EE	5.36	1.08	.115	-.048	.090	-.091	.86							
6.GPB	4.63	1.54	.053	.001	-.043	.061	-.16*	.71						
7.PPR	4.68	1.24	-.01	.01	-.12	-.10	-.15*	.45**	.72					
8.GAGA	4.62	1.45	.10	.03	-.06	.05	.11	.53**	.50**	.83				
9.NA	5.00	1.36	.13*	.01	.13*	.01	.42**	.12	.14*	.15*	.71			
10.II	5.22	1.40	.09	-.01	.11	.02	.45**	.12	.01	-.02	.49**	.81		
11.AS	5.28	1.43	.10	.06	.13	.01	.53**	-.01	.05	-.04	.45**	.62**	.78	
12.SA	5.27	1.33	.15*	-.02	.09	-.3	.55**	.09	.12	.08	.49**	.51**	.65**	.70

MS, Marital status; NA: Networking; SA: Social astuteness; AS: Apparent sincerity; II: Interpersonal influence' GAGA, Go along to get ahead; PPR, Pay & promotion; GPB, General political behavior; EE, Employee engagement.

Diagonal elements are reliability coefficient.

**p<.01. *p<.05

Table 7 Hierarchical Regression with Employee Engagement as Dependent Variable

Variables	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
Tenure	.11	.08	.08
Gender	-.03	-.04	-.04
Age	.16*	.18*	.18*
Marital status	-.21**	-.22**	-.20**
Type of organization	.01	.03	.02
PPR		-.15*	-.16*
GAGA		.10	.11
GPB		-.22**	-.20**
NA*PPR			.18*
NA*GPB			.22**
NA*GAGA			.11
II*PPR			-.06
II*GPB			.20**
II*GAGA			.09
AS*GPB			.12
AS*PPR			-.05
AS*GAGA			.10
SA*PPR			.19*
SA*GPB			-.12
SA*GAGA			.10
R ²	.07	.15	.31
ΔR ²	.07	.08	.16
F	2.230*	5.385*	7.546*

NA Networking, SA Social astuteness, AS, Apparent sincerity, II Interpersonal influence, GAGA Go along to get ahead, PPR Pay & promotion, GPB General political behavior. *p<.05. **p<.01

Fig. 2 Relationship Between Employee Engagement and Perception of Organizational Politics (pay & promotion) at High and Low Levels of Political Skill (Networking)

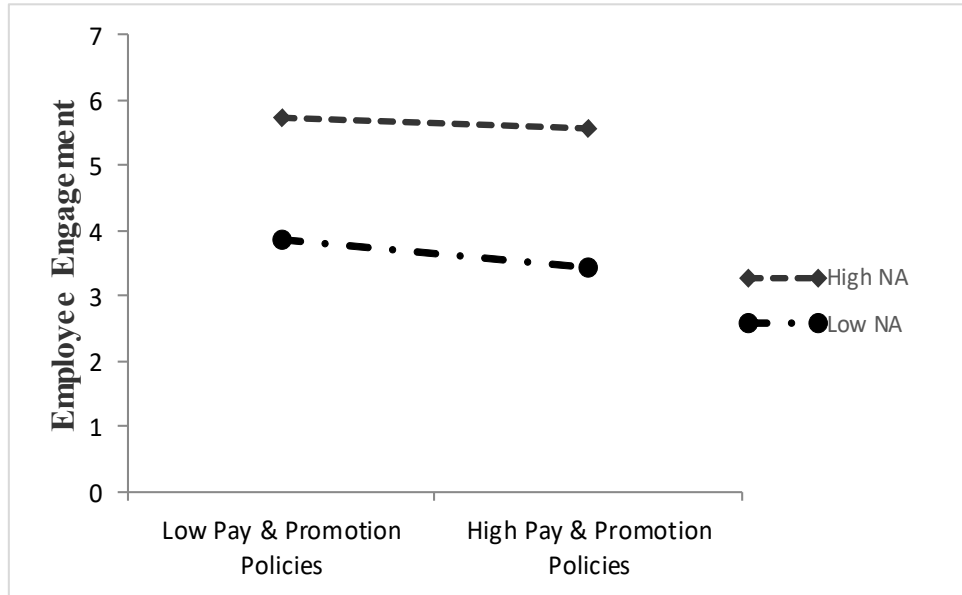


Fig. 3 Relationship between Employee Engagement and Perception of Organizational Politics (General Political Behavior) at High and Low Levels of Political Skill (Networking)

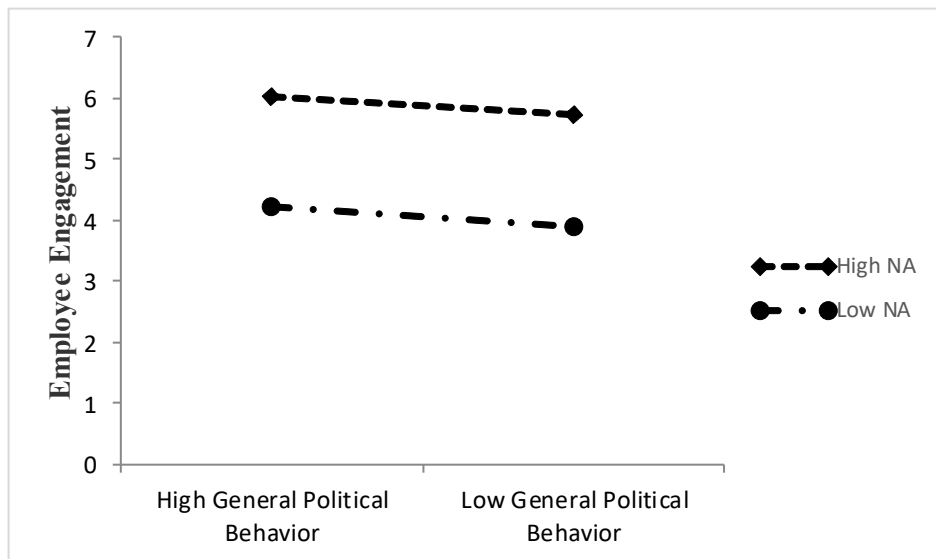


Fig. 4 Relationship Between Employee Engagement and Perception of Organizational Politics (General Political Behavior) at High and Low Levels of Political Skill (Interpersonal Influence)

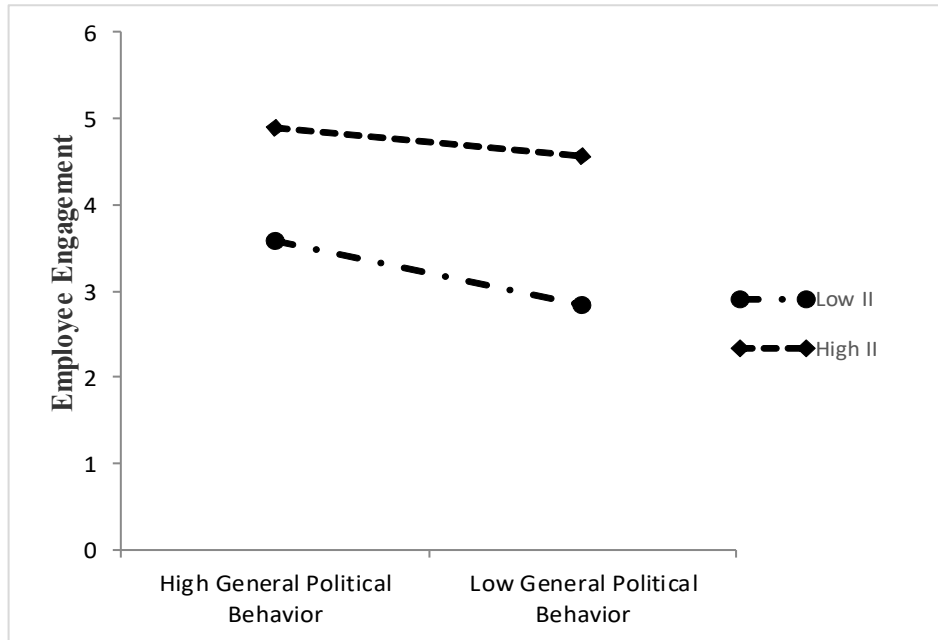
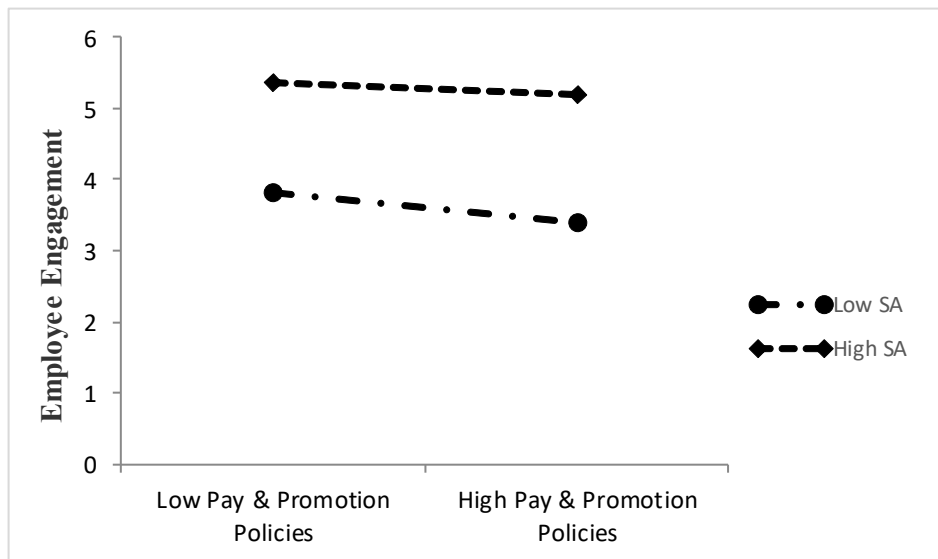


Fig. 5 Relationship between Employee Engagement and Perception of Organizational Politics (Pay & Promotion) at High and Low Levels of Political Skill (Social Astuteness)



Discussion

The purpose of the study was to resolve inconsistency in past studies involving POP by exploring the relationship between multidimensional POP and EE while accounting for the moderating role of multidimensional PSKILL. Both PPR and GPB were negatively related to EE, since GPB and PPR involve the use of self-serving behaviors to obtain valued resources, pay, and promotion. For employees without the relevant PSKILL, political environments will be stressful and will drain the available personal resources leading to lower EE. GAGA is not significantly related to EE. This dimension runs counter to the attributes of engaged employees since they are highly creative and innovative and use a lot of voice to share insights on organizational issues to enhance productivity, hence, they would not subscribe to GAGA. The results obtained indicate that unpacking the dimensions of POP gives a better representation of the relationship between POP and EE for the following reasons (Jain & Ansari, 2018).

Unpacking the dimensions of POP gives a better representation of the relationship between POP and EE.

The interaction terms NA* PPR, NA*GPB, II*GPB, and SA*PPR significantly predict EE. This shows that in an environment characterized by GPB and PPR, networking, interpersonal influence and social astuteness provide resources which engaged employees can use to maneuver in the environment and

still remain engaged. The interpretation of the result of these interactions showed that the negative relationships between PPR and EE, and GPB and EE were reduced for participants with high NA, II and SA political skills. Hence, these political skills provide resources that engaged employees use to maneuver through the stressful environment created by GPB and PPR. Being innovative and creative entails the development of innovative ideas, some of which may be paradigm shifts, thus requiring PSKILL to get them across to the organization to enhance productivity. Meanwhile, the interactions involving AS did not predict EE, as integrity and sincerity are already integral attributes of engaged employees (Kuntz & Roberts, 2014). Hence, engaged employees may not use AS as a strategic means of getting on in the organization.

Managerial Implications

Since EE enhances employee performance and is negatively affected by GPB and PPR, a major managerial implication is for managers to discourage environments that give rise to these dimensions of POP. These dimensions are encouraged in environments of inequity, that lack clarity on how pay decisions are made and how conflict is handled. They are minimized in an environment of high organizational support (Shoss et al, 2013) and teamwork (Valle & Witt, 2001). The GAGA dimension of POP runs counter to the desire of EE to make valuable contributions to the effectiveness of their job and team. An environment that does not encourage employee voice and employ-

ees' career is negatively affected by speaking out will give rise to GAGA. Managers should encourage open communication where people speak out on organizational issues without consequence to their career. The study shows that PSKIL helps employees to manage the negative effects of POP. This is because it helps employees to build networks needed to develop and implement their projects. Hence, the possession of PSKILL should be made a hiring criterion for all jobs especially those with high level of inter-dependence.

Limitations & Implications for Future Research

The use of self-report in acquiring data is inevitable in the study since the utilized variables are better provided by the involved individuals (Schellings & Van Hout-Wolters, 2011). Hence, common method variance is an issue. However, the design of the questionnaire coupled with the performed statistical analysis indicate that the level of common method variance is acceptable. All the variables were captured at a time and so causation cannot be inferred. Therefore, future studies should implement a longitudinal design to infer causation. All participating companies are in the private sector of the economy, and thus, generalization of obtained results must be cautiously made in public sector organizations where the level of political maneuvering is much more. It is also necessary to identify other personal resources available to engaged employees which can help them function in highly political environments.

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