

The Moderating Role of Emotional Intelligence on the Relationship between Perceptions of Organizational Politics and Work Outcomes

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Abstract

This study investigates the moderating role of emotional intelligence (EI) on the relationship between perceptions of organizational politics (POP) and work outcomes. In addition, it also examined the effects of POP and EI on work outcomes. Participants (n=332) from three public universities in Amhara region, Ethiopia has been selected using simple random sampling techniques. Results from structural equation modeling (SEM) shows that perceptions of organization politics (POP) are negatively linked to job satisfaction and affective commitment. Further, EI was positively related to job satisfaction and affective commitment. However, to the proposed moderating effects of EI, support was provided for job satisfaction only.

Keywords: Affective commitment; Affective events theory; Emotional intelligence; Job satisfaction; Organizational politics.

Introduction

Organizational Politics (OP) are regarded as pervasive, important for the normal functioning of business and a simple organizational life fact (Miller, Byrne, Rutherford, & Hansen, 2009). OP is conceived as a process of social influence in which actors' behavior is strategically designed to maximize short-term or long-term self-interest (Gotsis&Kortezi, 2011). In general, three approaches dominated the literature on OP. The influence tactics of employees are described in the first approach as political behavior at the workplace (Vigoda, 2002). Researchers also suggested various categories of such tactics of influence and their corresponding antecedents and consequences (Burns, 1961; Kipnis, Schmidt, & Wilkinson, 1980; Cheng, 1983). On the other hand, the subjective perceptions of the employees about the organization, instead of influence tactics was the focus of the second approach (Vigoda, 2000). Perceptions of organizational politics (POP) represent how people view their work environment as being political, which promotes other people's self-interests and is therefore unjust and unfair from an individual perspective (Kacmar& Ferris, 1991; Kacmar& Carlson, 1994). Recently, the third approach was put forward by researchers and is based on a view that political skills enable people to understand others and influence them successfully (Kolodinsky, Treadway, & Ferris, 2007). In the present study, a perceptual approach for OP was employed.

Empirical research over the decades showed a negative response from employees to POP in the workplace (Rosen, Harris, &Kacmar, 2009). This research is based on Ferris, Russ and Fandt (1989) work who states that:1) OP associates with activities which are not organizationally approved, and 2) employees respond to their political perception rather than to objective reality. Backstabbing, favoritism based rewarding of employees, strong tactics of influence and take credit for other people's work are types of political activities (Rosen & levy,2013) which makes POP to rise and often with the ignorance of the organization's and colleagues' well-being (Rosen et al., 2009).

Politics is therefore seen in 'pejorative sense', which will negatively affect employees who perceive politics (Gotsis&Kortezzi, 2011).

Even though academician with academic life experience have conducted studies on OP, there is scant of research on OP among university faculty which makes the meaning, extent, and effect of internal politics on university faculty performance unclear (Vigoda-Gadot, Talmud, &Peled, 2011). The following three reasons for the lack of information and data from academia are considered by Vigoda- Gadot et al (2011). First, it is less important to gather data in a situation in which one anticipates little heterogeneity and an atypical distribution of the results and it is possible to contend that OP is less prevalent in universities since they future themselves as centers of objectivity, diversity, and meritocracy. Second, their knowledge and sensitivity towards various methods of research make it difficult for scholars and experts to collect such data. Finally, according to the two points mentioned above, it can be said that academia has less attractiveness than other private or public organizations with regard to the issue of internal politics.

Despite being extensively studied topics in the organizational science additional research is still needed to find out the reasons behind employees negative reaction to OP (Rosen & levy, 2013). This type of study is importantly practical because it will help to identify various points of intervention for the process linking workplace politics to negative employee results (Rosen & levy, 2013). As the possible moderator for the POP and work outcomes relationship, Poon (2003) suggested EI. He argued, for example, that it is less likely to predict a politically charged environment as stressful if people are emotionally intelligent and are able to face the stress associated with that environment. Moreover, the effect that work-family conflict has on career commitment is also moderated by EI (Carmeli, 2003), in which the higher on the EI of senior manager, the less the negative impact of family/work conflict on the career commitment.

The concept of emotional intelligence became the focus of scholars starting from the early 1920s (Carmeli, 2003). The idea of social intelligence which was first proposed by Thorndike (1920) serves as a base for the emergence of the concept of emotional intelligence. The different conceptualization of the idea of emotional intelligence by several scholars can be generally grouped into two main categories as mental ability models and mixed models (Rathi, 2014). In their ability-based approach, Mayer and Salovey (1997, p. 5) defined EI as 'the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotions; the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotions and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth'. After reviewing the existing literature, Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2004) claim that EI embraces four abilities: perceive emotion, manage emotion, facilitating thought using emotion, and understand emotions. Emotion is defined as 'self-referential feelings an actor (employee) experiences or, at least, claims to experience in regard to the performances he or she brings off in the social world' (Van Maanen&kunda (1989, p. 53). On the other hand, the mixed models were proposed by other scholars (Bar-On, 1997; Goleman, 1998). These models are referred to as mixed models because it considers emotional abilities in relation to factors and traits of personality (Mayer, Caruso, &Salovey, 1999). Because of the mixed model's critics regarding the construct validity of EI (Meisler, 2014), the current study uses the ability- based model.

A large number of empirical studies have been carried out in western culture and suggested that EI has a positive effect on a number of individual and organizational results (Shrestha &Baniya, 2016). However, to the best of the knowledge of the researchers, no empirical studies have examined the influence of EI on outcomes in the Ethiopian context. Kitayama and Markus (1994), as cited by Shrestha and Baniya (2016), argued that the fact that culture form and sustain emotions is

generally acknowledged. The concept that various culture does not understand and discuss emotions in the same way basically leads to the question of whether the effect of EI on work outcomes is similar in different cultures (Shrestha & Baniya, 2016).

On the other hand, it is in recent time that the researcher had an interest in the emotional aspects of OP (Drory & Meisler, 2016). This is amazing because political conflict gives rises to a high level of emotions for both individuals who participate and bearing witness to this conflict. In their work on emotional aspects of OP, Drory and Meisler (2016) have explored new approaches. They have identified two major literature shortcomings in this regard. First, only moderate research consideration has been given to the possibility of political organizations creating emotionally difficult conditions which in turn may generate strong emotional responses among members of the organization. Secondly, there is also little focus on the contribution of EI in OP. They have made progress and suggest that the negative emotional reactions caused by POP and aggressive political behavior, which can be taken as a new position regarding the role of EI in OP, can be lowered by the individual EI levels. In addition, they claim that the focus of studies in the future should be the investigation of the hypothesized moderating role of the overall construct of EI so as to shed light on the way emotional ability provides the capacity to deal with negative implications of organizational politics. Thus, the primary objective of this paper is to investigate the direct effects that POP and EI has on two work outcome variables and whether EI has played any moderating role in the associations between POP and these variables.

Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

POP and Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is considered to be an extensively investigated OP outcome variable (Kacmar & Baron, 1999). Job satisfaction has been studied for many years as both independent and dependent variable by researchers of organizational behavior and industrial psychology (Fisher, 2000). Sirca, Breznik, & Babnik (2012) explained job satisfaction as the affective response of a person to work. According to Fisher (2000), even though job satisfaction in many instances are taken as individual affective response to work, it is commonly measured as a cognitive assessment of the work characteristics. Job satisfaction is an attitude consisting of at least two components which are a cognitive and an affective component (Fisher, 2000). Grounding from the nature of most job satisfaction questionnaires, Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) consider job satisfaction to be an assessment of one's job or work situation favorably or unfavorably. The belief structure and affective experience result in such assessment of the job (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996).

In a highly political environment, individuals will show dissatisfaction with the job in general if they perceive politics as aversive (Cook, Ferris, & Dulebohn, 1999). Poon (2003) argued that politically driven decisions are mainly seen as unjust and when employees perceived such unfair decisions they become dissatisfied. Rosen, Levy, and Hall (2006) stated that rewards are perceived as non-merit based in politically charged organizations according to the interpretations of POP-employees' work attitude relationships by expectancy theory. Rosen et al (2006) argued that due to unfair and impulsive reward system of a highly political organization which damage employees trust regarding the attainment of their need, they will have less pleasing work attitude. They base their argument on the idea of social market place proposed by Cropanzano, Howes, Grandey, and Toth (1997) which view the work setting as a social marketplace where individual expect a good return from their investment. Therefore, the following hypothesis was formulated considering these arguments:

H1: POP will negatively correlate with job satisfaction.

POP and Affective Commitment

Different scholars have conceptualized organizational commitment in different ways (Mishra, Sharma, & Swami, 2016). The most useful model developed by Allen and Meyer (1990) argued that organizational commitment consists of three dimensions. These dimensions are, normative, affective and continuance commitment. Specifically, three unique features are associated with these dimensions which are feeling of responsibility or obligation, affective attachment and cost perceived associated with leaving the organization respectively. Employees high in normative commitment stay because of their sense of obligation to the organization; employees high in affective commitment stay because they are willing to stay; employees who have greater continuance commitment stay because of their need to stay (Carmeli, 2003). Miller, Rutherford, and Kolodinsky (2008) consider affective commitment and organizational commitment measures of the early period which is unidimensional to be similar since the spirit of most of these early measures were highly affective one.

Previous studies report the detrimental effects of POP on the organizational commitment of employees (Kimura, 2013). Studies reported that lower commitment possessed by employees will result due to a person's perceptions of higher political behavior in their organization (Utami, Bangun & Lantu, 2014). However, Miller et al (2008) contend that research conducted on the relationship between organizational commitment and POP have been inconclusive. Considering all the above arguments, the following relation is hypothesized:

H2: POP will negatively correlate with affective commitment.

EI and Job Satisfaction

Researchers from various research fields have investigated the role of EI related to a variety of outcomes some of which are an academic accomplishment, social support, physical and mental welfare, and overall welfare (Mayer et al., 2008). The contribution of EI in the workplace has also been explored by studies. Some research has indicated that EI is related to higher levels of job satisfaction, lower negligent behavior, exit intentions, and burnout (Carmeli, 2003; Kafetsios & Zampetakis, 2008; Meisler, 2013; Vigoda-Gadot & Meisler, 2010).

Job satisfaction is an attitude consisting of at least two components i.e. cognitive and affective component (Fisher, 2000). Convincing evidence was provided particularly by Weiss, Nicholas, and Daus (1999) regarding the treatment of job satisfaction as an overall attitude consisting of both affective experiences and job cognitions (see: Weiss & Beal, 2005). Thus, since job satisfaction like all attitudes is composed of affective and belief components, the fact that variations in affective tendencies have been shown to be linked to variations in job satisfaction is not unexpected (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996).

EI abilities and traits were shown to have an influence on job satisfaction supported by enough evidence (Kafetsios & Zampetakis, 2008). Ybarra, Kross, and Sanchez-Bruks (2014) argued that emotional recognition and control are abilities that are predominant in numerous models of EI. Emotion recognition involves the person's ability to recognize emotions of themselves and other-experiencing and emotion control involve person's ability to manage emotions of themselves and others, mainly with the aim of sustain or generate positive affective states and averting or decreasing negative ones (Ybarra et al., 2014). High EI individuals are capable of maintaining good emotional conditions and prevent the negative ones (Meisler, 2014). When compared to with low EI individuals, those high in EI will undergo under a positive emotional state over longer periods of time than under negative emotional state and less likely ruminate about the distressful circumstance they encountered in the workplace (Meisler, 2014). Moreover, they reduce dissatisfaction by controlling and using impaired emotions through appropriately fitting them to the context. Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) theories of emotion in organizations indicated that affective states are the primary driving

force for organizational influences and personality on performance and job satisfaction at the workplace. Therefore, we can reasonably say that greater satisfaction from the jobs can be achieved by employees having high levels of EI relative to low EI individuals (Meisler, 2014). Hence, the following hypothesis is generated:

H3: EI will positively correlate with job satisfaction.

EI and Affective Commitment

Organizational commitment is the second most frequently assessed attitudinal construct next to job satisfaction (Camara, Dulewicz, & Higgs 2015). The concept of considering organizational commitment is an attitude has far-reaching understanding in the literature (Solinger, van Olffen & Roe, 2008). As an attitude, organizational commitment mirrors a state of mind linking an individual to the organization on the basis of its identification with the values and goals of the organization (Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012).

Work outcomes such as organizational commitment and job satisfaction have a strong relation with EI (Wong & Law, 2002). As Abraham (1999) points out, employees who cannot appreciate and regulate their emotions have less organizational commitment. Persons with a high degree of EI are also more committed (Nikolaou & Tsaousis, 2002) and perform well (Wong & Law, 2002). Due to their possession of optimistic and positive traits, emotionally intelligent individuals direct their attention on the resolution, rather than the reasoning (Abraham, 1999). Having a higher level of EI, individuals will not put the blame on the organization for their feelings of frustration which arise out of difficulties imposed by the organizations, rather they put themselves in good affective states and capable of pass-through adverse affective states with minor devastating outcomes (Carmeli, 2003). Thus, the fourth hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H 4: EI will positively correlate with affective commitment.

The Moderating Role of EI

Even though it is posited that those who take part and witness the political game subject to intense emotion due to the political struggle, the role of EI in OP have been overlooked (Meisler & Vigoda-Gadot, 2014). However, the emotional implications of OP have only recently attracted some academic and research interest (Drory & Meisler, 2016). Rosen et al (2009) stated that consistent with affective events theory (AET), several emotional, attitudinal and behavioral outcomes could happen because of POP. Behaviors and attitudes are determined by affective experience are the fundamental points of AET. Attitudinal and affective outcomes such as job satisfaction, burnout, cynicism, and affective commitment are the result of a negative or positive emotional response to organizational politics (Liu, Ferris, Treadway, Prati, Perrewé, & Hochwarter, 2006). Employees with a high level of EI can deal with the adverse emotions experienced at the workplace (Drory and Meisler, 2016). Beyond its direct effects on several career and work variables, such as job satisfaction and transformational leadership, EI believed to have a moderating role and improve the influence of different career success factors (Meisler & Vigoda-Gadot, 2014). The premise of the possible moderating role of EI regarding the negative effects of POP is not a new one (Drory & Meisler, 2016). According to Drory and Meisler (2016), the argument regarding the role of EI as a moderator on the relationship between POP and job outcomes with the provisions of resources to the employee which is necessary to cope with stress was first posited by Poon (2003). Considering these arguments, the following hypotheses were formed:

H5a: EI will moderate the negative relationship between POP and job satisfaction.

H5_b: EI will moderate the negative relationship between POP and affective commitment.

Thus, the conceptual model is presented in figure 1.

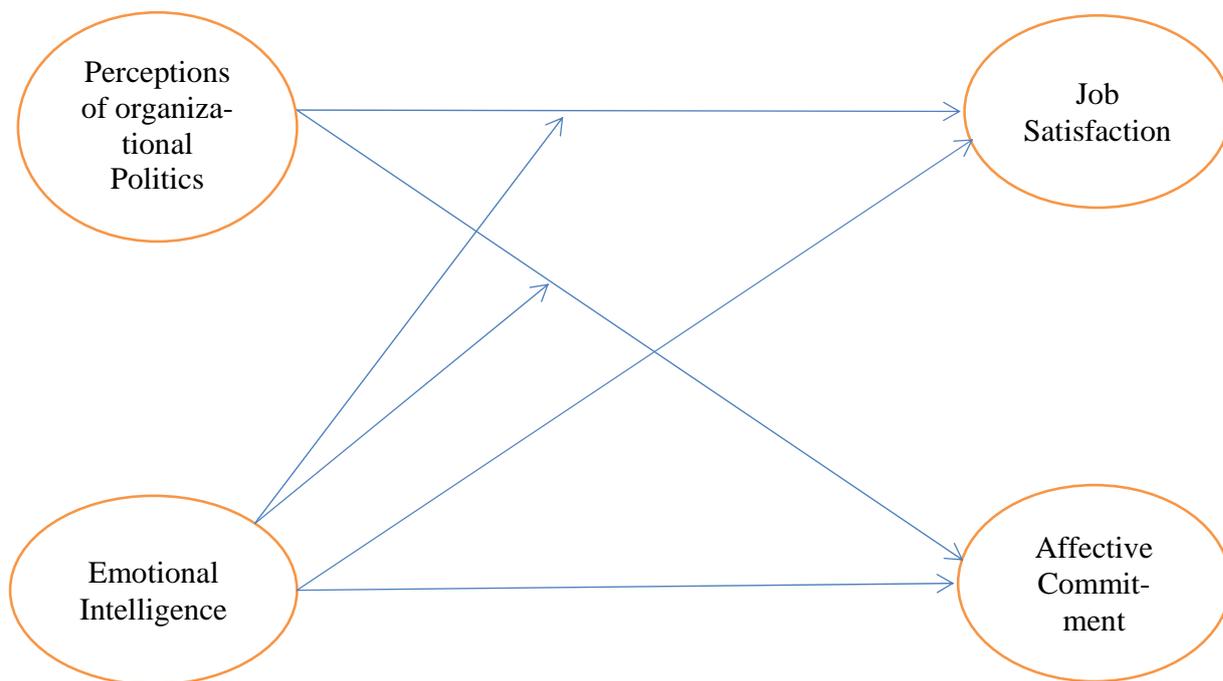


Figure 1. Conceptual model

Methodology

Participants

The present study was conducted among faculty members of three public universities which are found in Amhara region, Ethiopia. In total, 332 faculty members provided useful data for analysis (response rate = 83%). Of the 332, 283 (85.2%) were men and 49 (14.8%) were women.

Measures

All items for the variables of POP, EI, and affective commitment were measured on a 5-point Likert scale (strongly agree =5 to strongly disagree =1). For job satisfaction items a 5-point Likert scale (i.e., very satisfied =5 to very unsatisfied =1) were used. For each of these four constructs, an overall mean was formed by averaging scales item. Then the coding for each item is formed in a way to shows that low or high values correspond to the low or high level of the construct.

POP. Going Along to Get Ahead (GAGA), a four-item and a subscale of Kacmar and Feriis (1991) Perceptions of Organizational Politics Scale (POPS) were used to assess POP. Since POPS were found to be unidimensional (Nye & Witt, 1993), measuring politics by GAGA subscale should provide information similar to that obtained by the POPS.

EI. Wong and Law EI Scale (WLEIS) (Wong and Law, 2002) were used to measure EI. This scale assessed the four dimensions of EI: self-emotion appraisal (SEA), others' emotion appraisal (OEA), use of emotions (UOE), and regulation of emotion (ROE).

Job satisfaction. The six-item scale of Schriesheim and Tsui (1980) were employed to assess the level of employee job satisfaction.

Affective commitment. Six-item scale developed by Meyer, Allen, and Smith (1993) was used to assess affective commitment level of employees.

Results

Correlations of the Study Variables

Table 1 provides the zero-order correlations between the self-reported measures. As the table revealed, POP was negatively linked to job satisfaction and affective commitment. On the other hand, EI was positively associated with job satisfaction and affective commitment. All these findings are consistent with Hypothesis 1, 2, 3, and 4. Additionally, the reliability of all measures is acceptable.

Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations, Intercorrelations and Reliabilities (in the diagonal)

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
1. POP	3.1468	.96370	.793			
2. EI	3.6013	.80696	-.153**	.934		
3. Job Satisfaction	3.0663	.90175	-.270**	.448**	.842	
4. Affective commitment	3.3780	.79415	-.109*	.244**	.268**	.814

Notes: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Measurement Model

First, four dimensions (i.e., SEA, OEA, UOE, and ROE) representing EI were created following the recommendations of Little, Cunningham, Shahar, and Widaman(2002). SEM was used for inferential statistics and hypothesis testing applying AMOS 23 software. Constructs representing POP, EI, job satisfaction and affective commitment are included in the measurement model. All these latent constructs are allowed to correlate freely. For assessing the properties of the measurement model, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was applied with the help of AMOS 23. Good fit was demonstrated in the model ($\chi^2 = 290.451$, $df = 164$, $RMSEA = 0.048$; $GFI = 0.92$, $CFI = 0.951$, $TLI = 0.943$).

Discriminant validity test results are presented in Table 2. Anderson and Gerbing (1988) method were used to assess construct validity. Convergent validity can be shown if an items path loading to its latent construct is significant and greater than twice its associated standard error. For every factor, all item loading was significant, showing convergent validity. As per the suggestions of Anderson and Gerbing (1988), discriminant validity was established using a chi-square difference test between unconstrained measurement model (the parameter estimate for a pair of the latent construct is constrained to 1.0) and constrained measurement model (correlating a pair of latent variables by 1.0). If the chi-square value is significant, then discriminant validity between the two factors is supported. Six such tests have been performed and all are supported in this study.

Table 2. Results of two-latent variable models and tests of discriminant validity ($\Delta\chi^2$ evaluated at 1 degree of freedom)

	Pairwise Constructs	$(\chi^2), df$ “Constrained model”	$(\chi^2), df$ “Unconstrained model”	(χ^2) “chi-square difference”	“Discriminant Validity”
1	POP and EI	203.095, (df=20)	21.754, (df=19)	181.341	Established
2	POP and JS	285.658, (df=35)	94.272, (df=34)	191.386	Established
3	POP and AC	250.708, (df=35)	85.129, (df=34)	165.579	Established
4	EI and JS	163.904, (df=35)	114.474, (df=34)	49.43	Established

	Pairwise Constructs	$(x^2), df$ “Constrained model”	$(x^2), df$ “Unconstrained model”	(x^2_d) “chi-square difference”	“Discriminant Validity”
5	EI and AC	186.909, (df=35)	87.302, (df=34)	99.607	Established
6	JS and AC	208.415, (df=54)	143.081, (df=53)	65.334	Established

Common Method Variance (CMV)

This study results, despite its strength, are also susceptible to certain threats due to common method variance (CMV) since all the data were obtained simultaneously from the same individual and using the same method. Thus, to understand the extent to which the results are affected by CMV, Harmon one-factor test (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986) has been calculated by providing all scales of the study for exploratory factor analysis (EFA). Harmon one-factor test helps to determine whether the majority of the variance is due to one principal factor when we load all scales to this factor. If most of the variance is explained by one factor, the threat of CMV exists. Pallant (2007) suggested that there should be a significant value of Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($P < 0.05$) and KMO indexes of not lower than 0.6 so as to conduct a factor analysis. As shown in Table 3, value which is in line with this suggestions is achieved in this study. Then results from EFA using principal component analysis of multiple factors with Eigenvalues equal to or above 1 show that 30.027% of the variance is explained by the first factor demonstrating that CMV in the current study is not a threat. The result of EFA is reported in Table 4.

Table 3. KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.902
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	5274.422
	df	496
	Sig.	.000

Table 4. Total variance explained by a single factor

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	9.609	30.027	30.027	9.609	30.027	30.027
2	3.265	10.202	40.229	3.265	10.202	40.229
3	2.488	7.774	48.002	2.488	7.774	48.002
4	1.959	6.122	54.124	1.959	6.122	54.124
5	1.290	4.031	58.155	1.290	4.031	58.155
6	1.084	3.389	61.544	1.084	3.389	61.544

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Structural Model

Following testing of the measuring model fitness, a structural model is developed using prior theoretical arguments. This structural models fitness shows that the range is acceptable ($\chi^2 = 300.948$, $df = 165$, $RMSEA = 0.05$; $GFI = 0.917$; $CFI = 0.947$, $TLI = 0.939$) with all path coefficients were significant at $p < 0.05$. POP shows a negative and significant effect on job satisfaction and af-

fective commitment ($\beta = -0.22$ and $\beta = -0.14$ respectively). EI shows a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction and affective commitment ($\beta = 0.55$ and $\beta = 0.26$ respectively). Therefore, the structural model can be used for further analysis and hypothesis testing. The structural model AMOS graphical output is shown in figure 2.

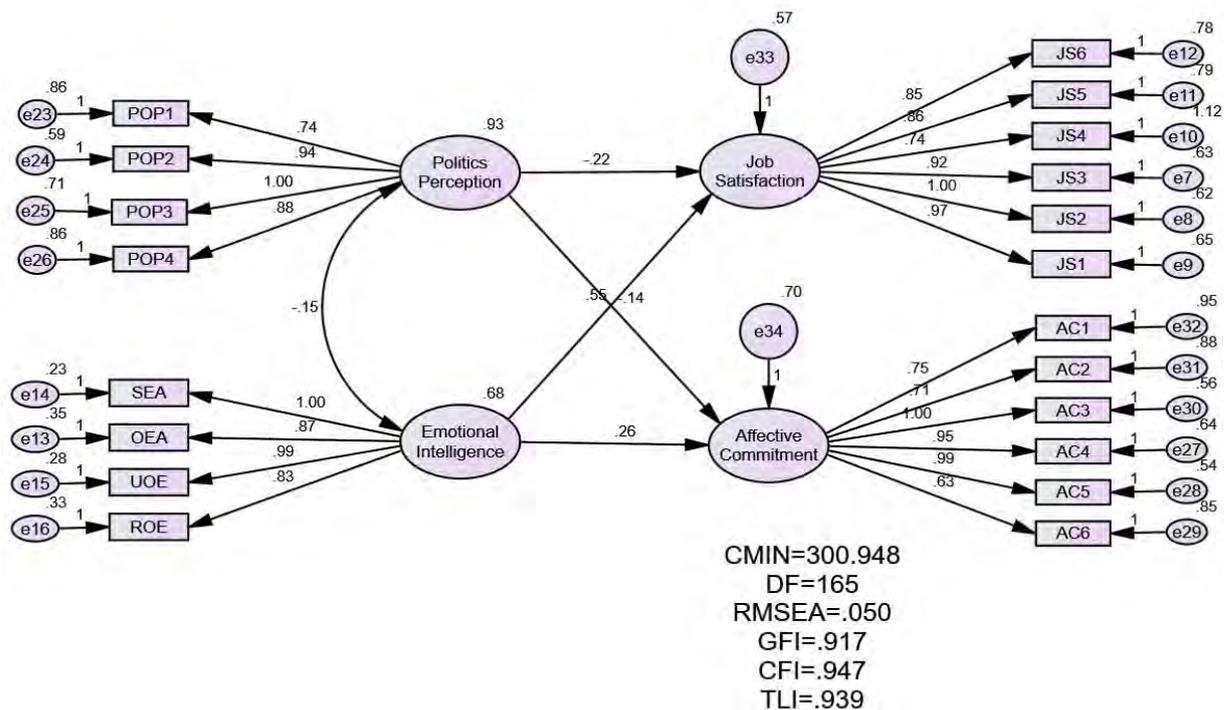


Figure 2. Structural model AMOS graphical output

Testing Moderating Role of EI

Ping (1996) proposed a two-step assessment process, which does not take non-linear constraints. First, the linear effect of latent variables alone is used to evaluate the structural model. The parameter estimates generated by this process are used to estimate the parameters of product indicator measurement models. The loading and error variance of interaction on POPxEI is computed using equation 1 and 2 proposed by ping (2004). The scales were mean -centered prior to the cross-product calculation for the interaction term so as to minimize the potential of multi-collinearity occurring because of the introduction of the interaction variable in the structural model. In the second phase, the analysis includes indicators of the product and non-product together. The values achieved by the first step are therefore used in the second stage as a fixed parameter. Interaction estimates for latent variables are incorporated in the second stage. The obtained results are then used to fix the parameters of individual indicators used as latent variables for interaction. As figure 3 revealed, the full moderation model also demonstrated good fit ($\chi^2=320.766$, $df=183$, $RMSEA=0.048$; $GFI=0.916$; $CFI=0.947$, $TLI=0.939$). The interaction (POPxEI) is significantly related to job satisfaction only ($\beta = -0.15$, $p < 0.05$). The results of structural model are presented in Table 5.

$$\lambda_{P:E} = \Gamma_P \Gamma_E (1)$$

$$\text{and } \theta_{\varepsilon P:E} = \Gamma_P \text{Var}(P)\theta_E + \Gamma_E \text{Var}(E)\theta_P + \theta_P \theta_E \quad (2)$$

Where $\lambda_{P:E}$ is the loading of interaction term on $POP \times EI$, $\theta_{\varepsilon P:E}$ is error term variance ($\varepsilon_{P:E}$) for the interaction term, $\text{Var}(P)$ and $\text{Var}(E)$ is POP and EI variance respectively, and $\Gamma_P = (\lambda_{P_1} + \lambda_{P_2} + \lambda_{P_3} + \lambda_{P_4})/4$, $\theta_P = (\text{Var}(\varepsilon_{P_1}) + \dots + \text{Var}(\varepsilon_{P_4}))/4$, $\Gamma_E = (\lambda_{E_1} + \lambda_{E_2} + \lambda_{E_3} + \lambda_{E_4})/4$, and $\theta_E = (\text{Var}(\varepsilon_{E_1}) + \dots + \text{Var}(\varepsilon_{E_4}))/4$.

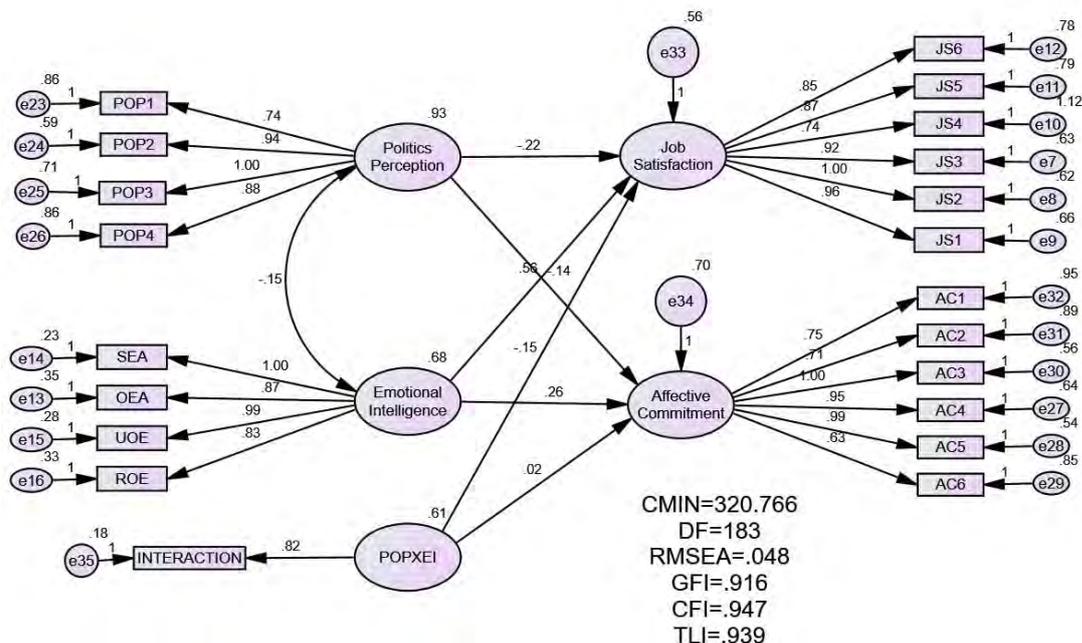


Figure 3. Moderation structural model AMOS graphical output

Table 5. Results of structural model

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Job_Satisfaction	<---	Politics_Perception	-.216	.058	-3.706	***
Affective_Commitment	<---	Politics_Perception	-.140	.061	-2.286	.022
Job_Satisfaction	<---	Emotional_Intelligence	.562	.070	8.020	***
Affective_Commitment	<---	Emotional_Intelligence	.261	.069	3.787	***
Job_Satisfaction	<---	POPXEI	-.146	.073	-2.005	.045
Affective_Commitment	<---	POPXEI	.020	.078	.258	.796

Discussion

The primary goal of this paper was to examine the direct effects of POP and EI on work outcomes, as well as the moderating role of EI on POP and work outcomes relationship. Discussion of the results of the study is presented in this section.

The research results show statistically significant effects of POP on job satisfaction. It has been supported that POP is negatively related to job satisfaction. This proposition was also supported and consistent with past findings that POP was negatively associated with a range of desira-

ble results such as job satisfaction (e.g., Bodla, Danish, & Nawaz, 2012; Vigoda-Gadot & Talmud, 2010). One possible explanation is that decisions motivated by political considerations are often considered unjust, which will make the employees unhappy in turn (Poon, 2003). In addition, the stress of working in a politically charged work setting increases dissatisfaction with jobs (Poon, 2003). So employees will not be satisfied with their jobs when they perceive the work setting as a political one.

Regarding the relation of POP with affective commitment, Chang, Rosen, and Levy (2009), by testing a theoretical model that combines POP with work outcomes, create a negative link between POP and affective commitment. Similarly, a negative relationship between POP and affective commitment is reported by Bodla et al (2012). They stated that a strong emotional attachment and sense of belonging towards the organization occurs if employees perceived their organization as less politicized. This study also showed that POP was negatively related to affective commitment.

Job satisfaction was found to be predicted by EI. EI and job satisfaction relations have been identified to be positive in previous studies (Sy, Tram, O'hara, 2006 & Wong and Law, 2002). As expected, the effects of EI on job satisfaction were similarly identified in this study. The results suggest that having a high level of EI will lead to job satisfaction.

In agreement with the fourth hypothesis, the study results indicated that EI has a strong positive association with affective commitment. People with a high degree of EI are more committed and perform very well in their organizations (Aghdasi, Kiamanesh, & Ebrahim, 2011). The logic of this argument is that since they can be aware of factors causing emotions and able to develop a strategy to reduce negative emotions, persons with a high degree of EI are capable of putting themselves in a good affective state (Jang & George, 2011). This is because people with a high EI have the capacity to place themselves in positive affective states as they can understand determiners of emotions and develop a strategy to reduce negative emotions (Jang & George, 2011). In support of this argument, Carmeli (2003) found that EI affects affective commitment positively.

Because empirical studies are broadly available on the direct linkages between POP and several work results, further empirical studies are necessary to identify the presence of indirect (mediated or moderate) effects (Vigoda-Gadot & Talmud, 2010). Since politics is considered indispensable for normal business operations, buffering its negative effects is essential (Byrne, 2005). This study showed that the effect of POP on job satisfaction was moderated by the employee's EI. However, EI does not play a moderating role on the influence of POP on affective commitment. This finding is inconsistent with Vigoda-Gadot and Meisler (2010), who found that EI moderates the influence of POP on affective commitment.

Conclusion

OP is ubiquitous and assumed to be important for normal business functioning (Miller et al., 2009). For years politics were considered to be a phenomenon which is an epidemic in an organization that should be investigated more empirically (Vigoda, 2000). Therefore, research in POP may help to promote good working condition in the selected public universities. Additionally, since this study is conducted in Ethiopia unlike most studies which are conducted in western countries it will have a contribution to the literature. Moreover, since culture affects the way people behave politically both inside and outside of the organization (Pfeffer, 1992), replicating this investigation in different work setting allows the cultural implications to be understood well. Generally, this study will have three major contributions. First, to the researchers' best knowledge, this study is the first of its kind in Ethiopia to use SEM to examine the effects of OP and EI on work outcomes, as well as the moderating role of EI in OP and work outcomes relationships. Thus, finding from this study will

help to know how these studies construct applied in Ethiopian context so as to improve the working environment. Second, it broadens our understanding in relation to workplace role of POP and EI. Lastly, it clarifies the process by which EI moderate the influence of POP on the two work outcomes. Therefore, addressing these three points will enable this study to have important practical implications.

Limitations and Future Research

Finally, several shortcomings of this paper and suggestions for future research has to be taken into account. First, the casualty of the data needs to be treated carefully as the current study has basically employed a cross-sectional design. Therefore, future research would be advantageous if they apply a longitudinal research design while investigating the moderating effects of EI on the link between OP and work outcomes. Second, as this study was the first of its kind in the Ethiopian work setting, unlike most studies which are conducted in western countries, the impacts of cultural factors need to be taken into account. Therefore, replicating this study in other settings by future research is essential to ascertain how the findings of this study align with the results of studies conducted in other work environments. Third, the sample was drawn from three public universities. Replicating this study using samples taken from several other universities in Ethiopia could help to validate the findings of the current study. Finally, the question of how to improve work outcomes through appropriate training on EI to employees should get enough attention. Even though the current study did not provide an answer to this question, it could help as a base for such an inquiry.

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