Understanding The Impact Of Manager's Political Skills On Compassion Behavior Towards Colleges: A Glams From Banking Sector Of Pakistan

Dr. GhulamDastgeer[1],Afsheen Khalid[2]

[1]*Department of Management, College of Business,*
University of Hail, Saudi Arabia
[2]*Air University School of Management, Air University, Islamabad, Pakistan,*

Email:[1]Dr.g.dastgeer@gmail.com,[2]afsheenmalik87@yahoo.com

Abstract
Among other social effectiveness constructs, political skill has attained more prominence in organizational psychology. The political skill helps the managers to cope up with workplace challenges and cultivating a healthy work environment.The study made an attempt to investigate the role of managers' political skill in performing compassion behavior towards others with the mediating role of interpersonal trust.The data was gathered from the sample of 219 managers serving in banks of Pakistan. Political skill inventory scale, dispositional positive emotion subscale for compassion and interpersonal trust scale were used to measure the constructs.The results revealed a partial mediation of interpersonal trust using process macro. Political skill helps the management to develop trust in coworkers and being more efficient and vigilant in feeling, noticing and responding the pain of coworkers by showing a compassionate behavior. The politically skilled individuals can be placed in the positions where there is more of a social interaction hence providing an edge to excel and work for the betterment of organization and colleagues.
Keywords: Political skill, compassion behavior, interpersonal trust, banking sector

1. INTRODUCTION

Political behavior is seen in common practice in the political arenas of organizations because of the uncertainty, risk, scarce resources, diverse needs and interests; that are considered as the key ingredients of modern organizations (Allison, 1971; Kimura, 2015; Pfeffer, 1981; Pfeffer&Salancik, 1974).If managers want to attain an eminent status in the competitive political environment of organization; they must have abilities to cope up with the changing situations, turning the threats into opportunities and weaknesses into the strengths and influencing the others around them (Butcher & Clarke, 2006; Gallagher & Laird, 2008) for objectives achievement. The social effectiveness constructs have gained much importance from the scholars and academicians of the field of organizational psychology in recent years (Solga et al., 2015) especially political skill. Political skill is the requirement for an individual to survive in the "political arenas" of organizations (Pfeffer, 1981; Mintzbetg, 1983). In response to the recent changes in the work environment and organizational structure like cross functional teams, flatter structure, strategy implementation etc. the use of influence is important (Pfeffer, 2010), so political skill is gaining much recognition in terms of managing the interactions within the organizations well. Political skill is defined as "an interpersonal style construct that combines social perceptiveness or

astuteness with the capacity to adjust one's behavior to different and changing situational demands in a manner that inspires trust, confidence, genuineness, and effectively influences and controls the responses of others" (Ferris et al., 2002, p. 111).

Some of the evidence from past literature highlights that most of the research in this domain examined the direct relationships among the political skills and outcomes (Harris, Kacmar, Zivnuska, & Shah, 2007) such as job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behavior, self-efficacy, carrier success, organizational commitment, work productivity, personal reputation (Ferris, Davidson, &Perrewe, 2005; Munyoun, Summers, Thompson, & Ferris 2015), team performance (Ahearn, Ferris, Hochwarter, Douglas, & Ammeter et al. 2004). However there are many gaps identified in the literature that highlights the need to study the relationship between political skill and positive behaviors especially compassion ((Munyoun et al., 2015). It has been witnessed in the literature that the workplace psychologists have started giving importance to the compassion (Moon, Hur, Ko, Kim, & Yoon, 2014) as it has attained a prominent role in the organizational life because it helps in alleviating the pain of individuals in the organizational setting (Dutton, Worline, Frost, &Lilius, 2006; Frost et al., 2006). The research scholars have a consensus that compassion is the concern and awareness of the suffering and pain of others and showing a caring behavior or response (Moon et al., 2014). There is a need to investigate how the politically skilled manager will show a compassion behavior and try to alleviate the suffering of others through their behavior and creating a work environment feasible for achievement of organizational objectives.Being a manager of any organization; it is the prime responsibility of a manager to create a healthy environment at work, and maintain a positive relationship with coworkers by engaging in positive behaviors. The management researchers claimed that the manager's duty is to function efficiently and effectively by acquiring or obtaining the support and resources from the organization and colleagues (Pearce, 2012).

The wave of globalization and rising market demands have transformed the banking sector of Pakistan from traditional manual work to more technologically advanced and automated. These substantial changes directly or indirectly influenced the individuals serving in banks in almost all the ways like socially, economically, and psychologically. Because of the technological advancements, tough competition and demanding jobs, banking sector employees are prone to many challenges and to deal with the challenges and changing situations they have to face organization politics as well (Batool&Ullah, 2013). To deal with the impacts caused in the sphere of banking sector the managers have to be more vigilant and efficient and respond in time.

Political skill is believed to instill interpersonal trust in the coworkers, so the need was also felt to examine the link between political skill and interpersonal trust (Gallagher, Meurs& Harris, 2016; Munyoun et al., 2015). Realizing all the challenges faced by employees of banking sector of Pakistan, the study attempted to discuss the role of political skill of manager in showing a compassion behavior towards others in the presence of mediating mechanism of interpersonal trust in coworkers under the umbrella of social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and norms of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The idea of political skill can be traced back to the discussions of Pfeffer (1981) and Mintzberg (1983) where the need to develop social skills in individuals was recognized by them to be effective and efficient in the organizations. Pfeffer (1981) was of the view that as organizations are political in nature so the skill set that is required to survive is "political skill". In order to achieve the desired objectives individuals must know the art of influencing,

persuading and controlling the others (Mintzberg, 1983). Political skill is categorized into four dimensions including social astuteness, apparent sincerity, networking ability and interpersonal influence (Ferris et al., 2005). Combining all these abilities gives individuals capability to understand the situations and people well and have more awareness and sensitivity of what is happening around them (social astuteness), and they are capable enough to acclimate their behaviors and actions accordingly (interpersonal influence), have capability to make themselves appear as confident and sincere (apparent sincerity) and are able to develop social networks and alliances (networking ability) (Bentley, Treadway, Williams, Gazdag, & Yang, 2017).

Compassion is viewed as a "prosocial emotion" bond an individual share with a suffering community (Goetz, Keltner, & Simon-Thomas, 2010) and develops sensitivity to the needs and pain of others (Ortony, Clore& Collins, 1988; Nussbaum, 1996). The compassion behavior is defined as "the feeling that arises in witnessing another's suffering and that motivates a subsequent desire to help" (Goetz et al., 2010, p.351). It is an expression of the extensive emotion of empathy (Decety& Jackson, 2006). On observing the pain and anguish of others, individuals experience compassion, which produces suffering and aspire to release that suffering. Compassion behavior towards others at workplace is an individual own feeling or emotion that ascends in order to respond to the suffering of co-worker and it is not directly linked to the formal job description or job responsibility (Madden,Duchon, Madden, & Plowman 2012). It is actually a personal choice or preference of a person to show compassion behavior towards others. This personal decision or choice to be compassionate towards others can be encouraged by the organizations by rewarding such act or by giving some informal platforms to facilitate the compassion behaviors (Atkins & Parker, 2011).

Politically skilled managers engage in the compassion behavior towards others and have the ability to modify the behavior of sufferers by instilling a hope in them by their supportive and compassionate behavior, and that struggle to alleviate the suffering of others seems to be genuine sincere and honest to others. Politically skilled managers are flexible in nature and they not only adjust their behavior according to the situation but can also generate the desired response from others (Ferris et al., 2007) and it helps the politically skilled manager to modify the responses of the ones who are the sufferers and can achieve their and organizations' desired objectives later too. The managers possessing political skills not only identify, feel and lesson the sufferings and pain of the coworkers but their positive vibes will have a positive impact on the behaviors of sufferers. The managers possessing political skills' basic motive is the goal attainment (Ferris et al., 2005) and by showing the compassionate behavior to their colleagues they develop a social exchange behavior with others who must feel obliged to respond in kind (Cropanzano& Mitchell, 2005) and will reciprocate towards them positively in future. The basic aim of the managers possessing political skill is to achieve the personal and organizational objectives (Ferris et al., 2005) hence they develop a support system for them for the achievement of objectives as a reward for the social exchange so they engage in compassionate behavior. Hence, it is hypothesized that:

H1: "Political skill is positively related to compassion".

Trust is a very broad concept and has been defined, analyzed, operationalized and categorized in different ways by various scholars in different fields. But the major problem on which the researchers agree is that there is a very little consensus regarding the definition of trust (Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, &Camerer 1998; Bigley& Pearce, 1998). Mcknight and Chervany (2001-2002) pointed that many trust definitions have been put forward, still many researchers are of the view that the trust is almost impossible to define because it is a broad concept and is interrelating with wide range of behaviors, and in their point of view the already presented definitions of trust are conflicting and confusing. Mayer,Davis and Schoorman(1995) defined

interpersonal trust as "the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party".

Interpersonal trust plays an important role in an organization's life and its role can't be ignored. Porter,Lawler and Hackman (1975) stated that where the trust is present there is a feeling that the others will not take benefit of the individual and trust aids individuals to take risk. And individuals believe that they will get what they are expecting rather than of what they have a fear (Deutsch, 1973). Trust not only covers the person's beliefs and expectations regarding others, but also their inclination to make use of that available knowledge as the base for the action (Luhmann, 1979).

Past researches have viewed the interpersonal trust impact through the lens of social exchange theory (Organ, 1990). Individuals trust the others having an expectation that if they will help them and try to alleviate their suffering and pain, the other party will reciprocate these behaviors in future too. Being aware of the pain and suffering of the other individual and developing the feeling of empathy are important and needed but it's not the only requirement to give a compassionate response (Lillius,Kanov, Dutton, Worline, &Maitlis, 2011). It happens at times that the suffering, anguish and pain of the other party is not so obvious and the risk factor is involved in showing a compassionate behavior towards others. In such uncertain situations, the interpersonal trust is that one important factor that motivates for taking the associated vulnerability (Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, &Camerer, 1998) and it influences either one will respond to the suffering of other (Dutton, Spreitzer, Heaphy, & Stephens, 2010) or not. So, we can assume that in such case where there is a risk involved in an interpersonal relationship to show compassion, the trust plays an important role and the manager (A) helps the colleague (B) and show compassion having a belief and confidence that B will respond the same behavior if A will be in some situation entailing risk (Boon &Holmes, 1991).

H2: "Interpersonal trust is positively related to compassion".

Individuals possessing political skills possess the ability to influence others (Ahearn et al., 2004), understand them and using their abilities of social astuteness, networking ability, interpersonal influence and apparent sincerity, they are able to achieve their and organizational objectives. According to Munyoun et al. (2015) the political skill stimulates the trust in others and it develops a confidence and belief in intrinsic value of such trust relationships and expectation that these feelings of concern, care and wellbeing; which they are devoting in the relationship will be reciprocated in future (Rempel, John, & Mark, 1985). The political skill develops the ability to develop networks, relationships, friendly alliances (Ferris et al., 2005; 2007) and helps the managers to develop such resource system for them whom they can trust. Politically skilled manager has the ability to exercise a powerful influence on the others in a convincing, refined and subtle way, plus adjusting one's own behavior in accordance to the situation in order to stimulate the desired responses from others (Ferris et al., 2007) so it will help to build the interpersonal trust among the politically skilled manager and coworkers as managers will be able to generate the desired response from them.

Therefore, it is hypothesized that

H3: "Political skill is positively related to interpersonal trust".

Zellars et al., (2008) viewed political skill as an interpersonal style construct, and trust plays a vital role in interpersonal relationships. Trust is actually related to the anticipation of the honest and cooperative behavior of others in future (Fukuyama, 1995). Viewing the relationship under the umbrella of social exchange theory we can assume that the political skill gives the manager confidence to develop the trust in coworkers in keeping an expectation that the future behavior of coworkers will be compassionate, helpful and

favourable (Robinson, 1996) towards them. The managers possessing political skill have the ability of being socially aware of themselves, others, situations etc (Ferris et al, 2005) and they develop trust in the coworkers that the behaviors of cooperation, concern, or we may say compassionate behavior towards the coworkers given today will be reciprocated (Rempel et al., 1985). By understanding this phenomenon of reciprocation, it is assumed that the politically skilled managers will try to try to identifycoworkers'pain, feel for them and try to sort out their issue by coordinating the resources from the organization and their own capabilities. Hence it is Hypothesized that

H4: "Interpersonal trust mediates the relationship between Political skill and compassion".

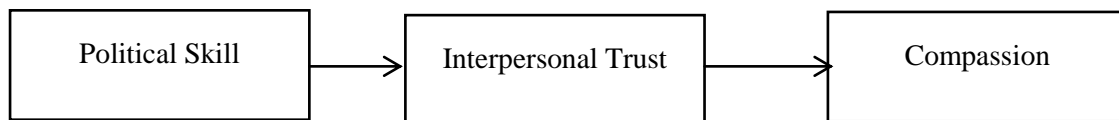Based on the above discussion figure 1 depicts the hypothesized model of the study

Figure 1: Hypothesized model of the study

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology of the present study revolves around the research onion proposed by Saunders et al. (2007). Following the Saunder's approach for designing the research methodology of present research reveals that the present study follows the philosophy of positivism. The deductive approach has been adopted as it moves from theory to formulating research questions or hypotheses. The present study is exploratory in nature as it tries to investigate the causal relationship between the variables. The survey approach is used for the study. Questionnaire is the extensively used tool in quantitative research and is helpful in collecting data from larger audience (Rowley, 2014). So the questionnaire has been used to collect the data. The study is a mono-method quantitative research as it has used quantitative method for data collection i.e. survey involving structures questionnaires. The present research is cross-sectional in nature as it collected the data from the respondents regarding the study variables at one point of time.

3.1 Sample and Procedure

A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed among the different levels of managers of the banks operating in the premises of Islamabad and Rawalpindi (Pakistan).The response rate was 73% as 219 managers responded well. Out of the 219 respondents 68% were male and 32% were female, 42% were from the age group between 20-30 years, 41.1% between 31-40 years, 15.5% between 41-50, and 1.4 falls between the age group 51-60 years. 90.4% were from private sector and 9.6% belonged to public sector. 37% of the respondents were front line managers, 44.3% were middle, and 18.7% were senior managers. 21% managers were having experience of less than 1 year, 43.8% managers experience falls between 1-3 years, 21.5% between 3-5 years, 8.7% between 5-10 and 5% managers had work experience more than 10 years. 18.7% respondents hold Bachelors degree, 67.1% had Mastersdegree, and 14.2% hold MS degree. Further while conducting the research full consent has been obtained from the participants of the present study and their privacy has been completely ensured.

3.3 Measures

All the scales used for measuring the variables are adopted from relevant literature and are employed on the 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree

3.3.1 Political skill.

Political skill is measured by using a shortened 8 item version of self-reported political skill inventory (Ferris et al., 2005; Vigoda-Gadot, &Meisler, 2010). It captures the four dimensions of political skill (apparent sincerity, interpersonal influence, social astuteness, and networking ability) identified by the Ferris et al. (2005). . Example includes: "I spend a lot of time and effort at work networking with others" etc. The Cronbach alpha reliability value of the scale in case of present study is 0.802.

3.3.2 Compassion.

Compassion is measured by the using 5 items compassion subscale of the dispositional positive emotion scale by Shiota, et al. (2006). Example includes: "Taking care of others give me a warm feeling inside" etc.The Cronbach alpha reliability value of the scale in case of present study is 0.904

3.3.3 Interpersonal Trust.

Interpersonal trust is measured by the using 6 items developed by Cook and Wall (1980). Example includes: "If I got into difficulties at work I know my workmates would try and help me out" etc. The Cronbach alpha reliability value of the scale in case of present study is 0.907.

4.RESULTS

The mean, standard deviation and correlation among the variables is shown in table 1.

Table 1
Correlation matrix

	Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3
1	Political Skill	4.2289	.59723	1		
2	Compassion	4.1352	.82639	.623**	1	
3	Interpersonal Trust	4.0624	.75594	.583**	.681**	1

Notes: N=219 **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The data of the present study has also gone through the common method bias assessment using Harman single factor test (Rusk, 2018). The results revealed that the maximum variance explained by a single factor is 45% which is below the threshold level of 50% suggested by Podsakoff et al. (2003); hence revealing no issue of common method bias in our case. For the present study hypotheses testing were done through Preacher and Hayes (2008) process macro. The results for the mediation effect of interpersonal trust between political skill and compassion relationship is displayed in the table 2.

The total effect of political skill on compassion, c= .8657, p=.0000; each 1% increase in political skill predicted approximately 86% increase in compassion. Political skill is significant predictive of the hypothesized mediating variable, interpersonal trust; a=.8445,

p=.0000. When controlling for political skill, interpersonal trust was significant predictor of compassion b=.4610, p=.0000. The estimated direct effect of political skill on compassion, controlling for interpersonal trust was, c'=.4764, p=.0000.

		Effect	Coefficient	SE	T	P	LLCI	ULCI
IV to M path a	Political Skill		0.84	0.08	10.55	0.00		
Direct effect of M on DV path b	Interpersonal Trust		0.46	0.05	8.49	0.00		
Total effect of IV on DV path c		0.86		0.07	11.7	0.00	0.68	0.96
Direct effect of IV on DV path c'		0.47		0.07	6.05	0.00	0.28	0.59
Model Summary	**R**	**R-Sq**	**F**	**P**				
	0.62	0.54	127	0.00				
Normal theory tests for indirect effect	**Effect**	**SE**	**z**	**P**	**LLCI**	**ULCI**		
	0.38	0.05	6.5	0.00	0.20	0.62		

Table 2:
Mediation Results for Interpersonal Trust & Compassion

Compassion was predicted quite well from political skill and interpersonal trust with R^2= 0.54, F=127, P=.0000. The indirect effect, ab was .3839, this was judged to be statistically significant using Sobel (1982) test, z=6.5, p=.0000. Bootstrapping (Preacher & Hayes, 2008) was performed requesting 2000 samples. For the 95% confidence interval, lower limit is .19 and upper limit is .75. In the present scenario both a and b coefficients are statistically significant, the sobel test for ab product is significant, and bootstrapped CI for ab product didn't include zero. By all these criteria, the indirect effect of political skill on compassion through interpersonal trust is statistically significant. The direct path from political skill to compassion (c') is statistically significant, therefore the effect of political skill on compassion is partially mediated by interpersonal trust. The results showed the acceptance for all the hypotheses.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The present piece of research tried to investigate the mediating role of interpersonal trust among the relationship between political skill and compassion based on the recommendation of Munyoun et al. (2015) and Gallagher et al. (2016). Politically skilled individuals are capable enough to understand the situations and people well and have more awareness and sensitivity of what is happening around them (social astuteness), and they are capable enough to acclimate their behaviors and actions accordingly (interpersonal influence), have capability

to make themselves appear as confident and sincere (apparent sincerity) and are able to develop social networks and alliances (networking ability) (Bentley et al., 2017). These abilities of being able to recognize give rise to interpersonal trust in coworkers that they will respond in kind. This trust then encourages engaging in compassionbehavior as they are able to notice, feel and respond to the pain and issues of the coworkers. Trust in others involves the expectation of the cooperative behavior in future (Mayer et al., 1995). The possession of abilities because of political skill give the individual's ability to identify the people whom they can trust and as a result the individuals possessing political skills show positive behaviors towards them by showing a compassionate response towards them.

The responses gathered from 219 politically skilled managers of banking sector of Pakistan revealed a partially mediation of interpersonal trust among the relationship between political skill and compassion behavior. It shows that apart from partial role of interpersonal trust as a mediator the direct relationship also exists between political skill and compassion behavior as political skill bestows the managers with the ability to observe and feel the problem of the colleagues and also give them the ability to respond to that problem.

6. IMPLICATIONS

The study adds value to the literature of compassion behavior as it is the first to address the role of political skill in generating compassion behaviors towards others especially in a developing country like Pakistan.The study also addressed the gaps identified by Munyoun et al., 2015 &Gallagher et al., 2016 to examine the mediating mechanism between the political skill and its outcomes. Therefore, the study investigated the interpersonal trust mediating mechanism among the political skill and compassion.

Pakistan has a collectivist culture (Hofstede, 2017) preferring long term commitment to others in groups, family, friends, colleagues etc. In a collectivist culture, even the work relationships involve a positive connection and responsibility of fellow groups is also taken. Hence, the political skill flourishes in such environment as it gives the ability to form networks, social awareness, interpersonal influence, sincerity and it motivates the individuals to show the positive behavior of compassion.

For a developing country like Pakistan; a thriving banking sector is the need of hour because growth and progression in the banking sector and real economy jointly strengthen each other. The banking sector of Pakistan possess the potential capability and structure to support the faster economic growth but it has been observed that Pakistan's banking sector has been experiencing massive changes because of different factors like globalization, national and international events (Khattak, Khan, Haq, Arif, &Minhas, 2011). To deal with the impacts caused in the sphere of banking sector the managers have to be more vigilant and efficient and respond in time. The political skill will help the managers to create healthy work environment by developing trust on coworkers and addressing their issues as well. Political skill is viewed as a capability that can be instilled in individuals by providing the opportunities to train, mentor and socializing (Ferris et al., 2002; Ferris et al., 2008; Pfeffer, 2010). The organizations can place the individuals having political skill in the positions where there is more of a social interaction (Munyoun et al., 2015) as political skill provides individuals with an edge and added value to excel, as they are able to accomplish their objectives and can work for the betterment of organizations and colleagues.

7. LIMITATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study involves the risk of common method bias as the data is collected from the same respondents at one time plus it is cross sectional in nature. The longitudinal study in future can be done to obtain more generalizable results. Future research may involve responses from coworkers to assess if they are receiving a compassionate response from politically skilled managers. The study involves only two cities that reduces the generalizability of results. Future studies may involve other major cities to ensure representation from all provinces. The future studies can make a comparison of use of political skill by managers among private and public sector banks.

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