

the role of political skills in enhancing emotional intelligence within organizational environment: a study on impact and interdependence

DIVYESH K PATEL

PhD Scholar, (SLM) P P Savani University Surat.

DR TEJAL PATEL

Associate Professor (SLM) P P Savani University Surat.

DR PARAG SANGHANI

Provost P P Savani University Surat.

ABSTRACT

This research explores the relationship between Political Skills and Emotional Intelligence (EI) in Organisational Settings. By analysing how political acumen and emotional awareness interact, the study seeks to uncover how they affect critical interpersonal skills & Employee motive. This study used a questionnaire and was conducted in the Manufacturing sector of Gujarat India. Questionnaires were properly filled and 100 respondents were considered fit to be used in the study. Quantitative study was conducted & The Primary Data was collected through an online Google form from the 100 employees of Gujarat State, India working in the Manufacturing Sector on the scale of Political Skills from Ferris (18 Items) And Emotional Intelligence From Wong And Law (16 Items) which was then analysed through SPSS.

A level of significance was observed between the dimensions of Political Skills and dimensions of Emotional Intelligence. Regression equations were prepared to observe the impact of dimensions of Political Skills on the dimensions of Emotional Intelligence. The results showed that Political Skill positively affected dimensions of Emotional Intelligence. The paper also investigates whether individuals with high Emotional Intelligence are more adept at utilizing Political Skills ethically to achieve organisational goals, and how such skills affect Organisational Environment.

By examining the role of Political Skills and EI in shaping Organisational Environment, the study could provide guidance on how to cultivate a positive, transparent, and collaborative culture. The ethical use of Political Skills by emotionally intelligent individuals can foster trust, cooperation, and cohesion within teams. On the other hand, Political Skills used unethically or without emotional insight could lead to power struggles and toxic workplace environments.

Keywords: Political Skills, Emotional Intelligence, Organisational Environment.

1. INTRODUCTION:

The relevance of political skill has expanded beyond traditional corporate settings to include various organizational contexts such as nonprofits, educational institutions, and government agencies. In each of these settings, political skill is recognized as a crucial element of effective leadership and organizational performance.

The digital age and the increase in remote work has also influenced the expression of political skills, with virtual networking and online communication requiring new forms of social astuteness and influence.

Jeffrey Pfeffer, a prominent organizational theorist, is well-known for his work on power and politics in organizations. While Pfeffer's contributions to the study of power and political behavior are significant, the specific concept of 'political skill' and its detailed dimensions was more thoroughly developed by Gerald R. Ferris and his colleagues. Ferris identified 4 core dimensions of political skill that have become widely recognized in the field of organizational behavior.

The 1980s marked a significant shift with the formal introduction of political skill as a distinct concept within organizational behavior. Political skill was initially viewed as a subset of broader organizational politics and was often associated with manipulative or self-serving behavior.

Scholars like **Jeffrey Pfeffer (1981)** in his work *"Power in Organizations"* discussed how power dynamics and political skill are critical for navigating organizational life. Pfeffer's work emphasized that political skill is not inherently negative but can be used constructively to achieve organizational objectives.

2. THEORITICAL BACKGROUND:

POLITICAL SKILLS:

Political skills refer to the ability to navigate and influence social and organizational environments to achieve desired outcomes. These skills are crucial in both professional and personal settings, as they involve managing relationships, building alliances, and understanding the dynamics of power. Here are some key components of political skills:

1. **Social Astuteness (SA):** This involves being aware of others' needs, motivations, and emotions. Socially astute individuals can read situations and understand the dynamics of a group or organization. They can interpret unspoken cues and adjust their approach accordingly.
2. **Interpersonal Relation (IPR):** This is the ability to persuade and influence others without being overt or coercive. People with this skill can shape opinions, change minds, and rally support through subtle communication techniques, body language, and persuasion.
3. **Networking Ability (NA):** Political skills involve the ability to build and maintain relationships that provide access to information, resources, and opportunities. Networking allows individuals to connect with key stakeholders and create alliances that help them achieve their goals.
4. **Apparent Sincerity (AS):** This refers to the ability to appear genuine and authentic, even when navigating complex or sensitive situations. People with high political skills can build trust by making others feel valued and respected, even if they have ulterior motives.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE:

Emotional Intelligence (EI) refers to the ability to recognize, understand, manage, and influence your own emotions, as well as the emotions of others. It plays a crucial role in forming strong relationships, managing stress, making decisions, and navigating social complexities. Emotional intelligence is often broken down into four key components:

The WLEIS was developed to measure emotional intelligence across **four key dimensions**:

1. **Self-emotion appraisal (SEA):** This refers to the ability to recognize and understand your own emotions. It's about being aware of your feelings and how they influence your behavior.
2. **Other-emotion appraisal (OEA):** This involves the ability to recognize and understand the emotions of others. It's about being empathetic and reading emotional cues from others.
3. **Use of emotion (UOE):** This refers to the ability to use emotions to facilitate thinking and problem-solving. It means knowing when and how to channel your emotions effectively in different situations.
4. **Regulation of emotion (ROE):** This refers to the ability to regulate or manage emotions, both your own and others'. It's the skill of calming yourself down or helping others manage their emotional states.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW:

Perrewé, P. L., Zellars, K. L., Rossi, A. M., Ferris, G. R., Kacmar, C. J., Liu, Y., ... & Hochwarter, W. A. (2005) studied the effect of Political skill in an overload-strain relationship. They argued that Politically Skilled individuals enjoy the personal sense of freedom which allows them to control and dominate the environment around them in the Organization. Authors explained the Overload-Strain relationship as Job Tension and Stress; hence Political Skills have a negative relationship with the overload-strain relationship. Hence higher the political skill, the lower the job tension and stress. It was also suggested that job stress cannot be just defined with overload strain relationships but a few more variables have to be taken into consideration.

Treadway, D. C., Breland, J. W., Adams, G. L., Duke, A. B., & Williams, L. A. (2010) studied the Interactive effects of Political Skills on Career and Networking Activity. Results were analysed from the sample of 291 managers from the national retail chain. The study hypothesized that the stylistic component of Political Skills would interact and indicate the intensity and target of Networking Activity. Results indicated that politically skilled Individuals who possess deep future time perspectives were more involved in career-related networking, and those with less future time perspectives were less involved in career-related networking. Additionally, Political Skills People showed a higher level of community-based networking.

Bing, M. N., Davison, H. K., Minor, I., Novicevic, M. M., & Frink, D. D. (2011) argued that political skill is a very new concept, but used in a variety of studies to predict job performance. Hence this study was also carried out to see the moderating effects of political skills. Political Skills have a direct effect on interpersonal relations and job performance according to the previous studies but in the present study authors also argue that it is a valid predictor of job performance. The strength of positive relationships in the organization increases with the rise of political skills among the employees.

Ferris, G. R., Treadway, D. C., Brouer, R. L., & Munyon, T. P. (2012) Explored the topic of Political Skills In Organizational Sciences. The history of Political Skills was studied and all the past research papers on Political Skills were studied to gain an understanding of Political Skills and the Role of Political Skills in Organizational settings. Of all the studies it was found that Politically Skilled Individuals are more likely to emerge as Informal leaders with high abilities.

Wu, L. Z., Yim, F. H. K., Kwan, H. K., & Zhang, X. (2012) studied the effects of Political Skills on the Psychological Distress of employees. A study was conducted on 215 employees from 2 different oil firms in China. Findings revealed that the psychological distress was affected by the level of political skill of the employee in the organization. Higher the political skill higher mood and lower psychological distress. In a broader context psychological distress costs a lot in terms of productivity and effectiveness and political skills help a lot in saving these costs. However, it was suggested to use more variables to have a deeper understanding of the role of political skills and their effect on Psychological Distress.

Sarkar, S., & Suresh, A. (2014) studied the relationship of Personality, Political Skills and Emotional Intelligence with Emotions at Work. A study was conducted on 200 customer service executives all over the country with a cross-sectional study. The study revealed that all the big 5 personality dimensions and political skills have a positive relationship to emotional work. It was also observed that political skill also works to enhance the emotional intelligence of the executive which provides emotional maturity to his personality and helps him to manage emotional work. It was also suggested that very few Indian researchers have thrown light on the emotional aspects of the executives which should be explored more.

Munyon, T. P., Summers, J. K., Thompson, K. M., & Ferris, G. R. (2015) studies the impact of Political Skills on Work Outcomes. A quantitative study was conducted. Meta-analytic results showed that Political Skill is positively related to work Outcomes. Political Skills explain incremental variation in task performance as well and predict the overall contextual performance of the whole Organization. Most importantly Political Skills helps one to craft his own image and persona through which he enhances his reputation in the organizational setting. This study also supports the previous studies conducted.

Durrani, A. B., & Cheema, S. (2016) studied the impact of Political Skills and Emotional

Intelligence on the turnover intention of 171 employees of four public sector universities in Pakistan. Studies revealed that all dimension of Emotional Intelligence was negatively correlated with turnover intentions and all the dimensions of Political Skills were also negatively correlated with turnover intentions. Results also state that Emotional intelligence is a strong predictor while political skills are the weak predictor of turnover intentions. It was also suggested to conduct future studies with large sample sizes and demographic factors. Political Skills can also be used as a moderator between Emotional Intelligence and other variables.

Drory, A., & Meisler, G. (2016) studied the relationship between Emotional intelligence and Organizational Politics. This paper reveals the Gaps in the previous literature and reviews the role played by Emotional Intelligence in various fields of Organizational Politics. It was observed that the political shift in the organization gave rise to emotional intelligence. Hence it has been overlooked in the previous studies and should be taken into consideration. Whereas little attention has been given to Emotional Intelligence and Political Skills in the previous studies which needed to be explored. As this study provides the theoretical backup it was further suggested conducting a study by collecting the data. Which would enhance our understanding of Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Politics.

Sunindijo, R. Y., & Maghrebi, M. (2020) studied the effect of Political Skills towards improving Emotional Intelligence. Data was collected from 273 project personnel from the construction Industry in Australia. The purpose of the study was that Political Skills were less compared with Emotional Intelligence, especially in conflict-laden industries. Results showed that political skill is the precursor to emotional intelligence. Political Skills reduce the level of conflict amongst employees and increase the level of emotional intelligence. But here it was suggested that the implementation cannot be generalized because only the construction industry was concerned. Employees use political skills to reduce stressors and use it to enhance relationships with their fellow employees.

4. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

The manufacturing sector has always been considered the heart of the GDP of the country and when organizations are concerned people and their political skills tend to play a much larger role in the functioning of the individual as well as the organization. Human beings are believed to play two major roles in their life to climb the ladder of success in their personal as well as professional life. The two roles are Negotiation and Manipulation. Hence political skills of the human or the employee become the utmost priority when it comes to personal ambition. Employees tend to exploit their subordinates emotionally when it comes to achieving personal success. Emotional Intelligence has been studied in the last 2 decades but we can say a little attention has been given to the political skills of an employee. Based on our literature studies we intend to explore the effects of political skills on the emotional aspects of the employees.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND MEASURES:

Data collection: The Primary Data was collected through an online Google form from the 100 senior-level managers of Gujarat State, India working in the Manufacturing Sector on the scale of Political Skills from Ferris (18 Items) And Emotional Intelligence From Wong And Law (16 Items).
PS: Ferris's (2005), scale of political Skills was adopted to measure PS having 18 Items. The four dimensions of PS are measured by combining the four into a single PS measure Items were answered on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

EI: Wong and Law Scale of 16 Items were used to measure Self Emotional Appraisal, Others' Emotional Appraisal, Regulation of Emotions, and Use of Emotions on a scale of Likert ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

6. DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION:

Political Skills

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.898	18

Emotional Intelligence

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.866	16

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
SA	100	3.76	.712	.507	-.982	.241	2.126	.478
IP	100	3.99	.674	.454	-.392	.241	.467	.478
NA	100	3.67	.753	.567	-.383	.241	-.012	.478
AS	100	3.91	.726	.527	-.184	.241	-.313	.478
SEA	100	4.01	.745	.555	-1.211	.241	3.061	.478
OEA	100	3.86	.682	.465	-.988	.241	2.938	.478
UOE	100	4.23	.737	.543	-1.013	.241	1.494	.478
ROE	100	3.77	.815	.664	-.580	.241	.070	.478
Valid N (listwise)	100							

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.801
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	863.232
	df	153
	Sig.	.000

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.804
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	606.408
	df	120
	Sig.	.000

From the above analysis, it has been observed that the scales are reliable for the study as Cronbach Alpha value for both the scales is above 0.7. Data has also proved to be valid as the KMO values are above 0.7 again for both the scales. Normality of data has been observed based on the values of skewness & kurtosis between the range -2.96 to +2.96. Hence the data is fit for the study and hence exploratory factor analysis is carried out to check the factor loadings of each dimension of one variable on the other & regression models are tested to see the impact of Political Skills dimensions on the dimensions of Emotional Intelligence.

FACTOR LOADINGS:

Communalities

	Extraction	
SA1	.601	
SA2	.508	
SA3	.543	
SA4	.533	
SA5	.649	
IP1	.488	
IP2	.684	
IP3	.666	
IP4	.758	
NA1	.635	

NA2	.592	
NA3	.571	
NA4	.718	
NA5	.593	
NA6	.753	
AS1	.698	
AS2	.800	
AS3	.373	
SEA1		.730
SEA2		.787
SEA3		.689
SEA4		.637
OEA1		.713
OEA2		.761
OEA3		.614
OEA4		.591
UOE1		.721
UOE2		.622
UOE3		.679
UOE4		.600
ROE1		.681
ROE2		.713
ROE3		.647
ROE4		.704
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.		

REGRESSION TESTS:

Model Summary ^b					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.355 ^a	.126	.089	.711	1.852
a. Predictors: (Constant), Apparent Sincerity, Social Astuteness, Interpersonal Relation, Networking Ability					
b. Dependent Variable: Self Emotional Awareness					

ANOVA ^a					
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.

1	Regression	6.923	4	1.731	3.421	.012 ^b
	Residual	48.067	95	.506		
	Total	54.990	99			
a. Dependent Variable: Self Emotional Awareness						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Apparent Sincerity, Social Astuteness, Interpersonal Relation, Networking Ability						

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.177	.530		4.107	.000
	Social Astuteness	.115	.117	.110	.990	.325
	Interpersonal Relation	.173	.123	.157	1.408	.162
	Networking Ability	-.051	.113	-.051	-.448	.655
	Apparent Sincerity	.228	.113	.223	2.020	.046
a. Dependent Variable: Self Emotional Awareness						

Model Summary ^b					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.572 ^a	.327	.298	.571	1.925
a. Predictors: (Constant), Apparent Sincerity, Social Astuteness, Interpersonal Relation, Networking Ability					
b. Dependent Variable: Others Emotional Awareness					

ANOVA ^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	15.047	4	3.762	11.531	.000 ^b
	Residual	30.993	95	.326		
	Total	46.040	99			
a. Dependent Variable: Others Emotional Awareness						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Apparent Sincerity, Social Astuteness, Interpersonal Relation, Networking Ability						

Coefficients ^a							
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	1.420	.426		3.336	.001	
	Social Astuteness	.451	.094	.471	4.819	.000	
	Interpersonal Relation	.061	.099	.060	.615	.540	
	Networking Ablity	.094	.090	.104	1.041	.301	
	Apparent Sincerity	.040	.091	.042	.438	.663	
a. Dependent Variable: Others Emotional Awareness							
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate			Durbin-Watson
1	.466 ^a	.217	.184	.665			1.629
a. Predictors: (Constant), Apparent Sincerity, Social Astuteness, Interpersonal Relation, Networking Ablity							
b. Dependent Variable: Use of Emotions							

ANOVA^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	11.676	4	2.919	6.597	.000 ^b
	Residual	42.034	95	.442		
	Total	53.710	99			
a. Dependent Variable: Use of Emotions						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Apparent Sincerity, Social Astuteness, Interpersonal Relation, Networking Ability						

Coefficients^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.820	.496		3.672	.000
	Social Astuteness	.061	.109	.059	.561	.576
	Interpersonal Relation	.194	.115	.178	1.688	.095
	Networking Ability	.234	.105	.240	2.225	.028
	Apparent Sincerity	.139	.106	.137	1.318	.191
a. Dependent Variable: Use of Emotions						

Model Summary^b					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.358 ^a	.128	.092	.776	2.097
a. Predictors: (Constant), Apparent Sincerity, Social Astuteness, Interpersonal Relation, Networking Ability					

b. Dependent Variable: Regulation of Emotions

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	8.441	4	2.110	3.501	.010 ^b
	Residual	57.269	95	.603		
	Total	65.710	99			
a. Dependent Variable: Regulation of Emotions						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Apparent Sincerity, Social Astuteness, Interpersonal Relation, Networking Ability						

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.952	.578		3.374	.001
	Social Astuteness	.223	.127	.195	1.749	.084
	Interpersonal Relation	.207	.134	.171	1.537	.128
	Networking Ability	.151	.123	.139	1.225	.223
	Apparent Sincerity	-.101	.123	-.090	-.820	.414
a. Dependent Variable: Regulation of Emotions						

From the above 4 regression models, we can disregard 2 regression models because in both of them less than 20% of the variance is observed in Emotional Intelligence due to effect of Political Skills. And from the other 2 models we have observed more than 20% towards Emotional Intelligence due to the dimensions of Political Skills and the effects are significant ($P < 0.05$) at 95% confidence level. The Equations which shows the effects of dimensions of Political Skills towards Emotional Intelligence are as follows:

$$\text{Others Emotional Awareness} = 1.420 + (0.451) \text{ Social Astuteness.}$$

$$\text{Use of Emotions} = 1.820 + (0.234) \text{ Networking Ability}$$

7. CONCLUSION

We Can finally conclude from the above study and results that; a few dimensions of political skill have a direct significant impact on emotional intelligence and its dimensions. Increase in the level of Social Astuteness directly enhances the level of Emotional Awareness towards other Co Workers. Which proves that when employees are socially active & engaging in social conversation with the fellow employees at the organisation they tend to develop awareness about what other person is thinking & feeling. Increase in the levels of Networking Ability also Enhances the how the employee is able to channel his own emotions towards achieving his & organisation's goal. When an employee creates a network to support his own ambition & vision of an organisation it means that he is very well motivated about his own speed & direction to achieve what he wants in the organisational settings. Hence, we can conclude political skills do enhance emotional intelligence to a greater extent considering the present study.

8. LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER SUGGESTIONS:

The major limitation of the study is that the sample size is small with only 100 respondents, so it could be suggested that a large sample size could be taken comparing different industries. Individual questions were not tested so it could be suggested that to produce more accurate results on the impact of Political Skills on Emotional Intelligence. Individual Questions can be tested with each other. The study was limited to the manufacturing sector of Gujarat and demographics were not taken into consideration so other sectors and other states could also be taken into consideration for the study and demographics could also be studied in Detail.

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