ISTANBUL TICARET UNIVERSITY
INSTITUE OF GRADUATE SCHOOL
DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

THE MEDIATING ROLE OF EMOTIONAL LABOR IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERCEPTIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL POLITICS AND JOB DISSATISFACTION

MA Thesis

İlknur ÜNER

ISTANBUL, 2025

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ETHICS STATEMENT

I declare that this thesis is my own work. I followed all the rules and ethics of the Council of Higher Education and Istanbul Ticaret University. I have given credit to all the sources I used. The ideas in this thesis are mine and do not show the official view of Istanbul Ticaret University.

İlknur Üner

Signature:

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the mediating role of emotional labor in the relationship between employees' perceptions of organizational politics and job dissatisfaction. To achieve this purpose, a cross-sectional digital survey was conducted among 387 employees from 26 different sectors in Istanbul, Türkiye. The data were analyzed through linear regression tests. Organizational politics were positively associated with job dissatisfaction and surface acting. Surface acting significantly mediated the relationship between organizational politics and job dissatisfaction. Unlike expectations, deep acting showed a weak positive correlation with job dissatisfaction, while naturally felt emotions are not significantly related to job dissatisfaction. Surface acting contributed to the explanation of organizational politics' undesired effects on employees. Participants reported displaying fake behaviors as a response to the political behaviors of others. This helped them better deal with workplace politics. Accordingly, to promote employee job satisfaction, workplace politics must be minimized.

Keywords*: emotional labor, organizational politics, job dissatisfaction, surface acting, deep acting, naturally felt emotions, social exchange theory, equity theory.*

ÖZET

Bu araştırmanın amacı, çalışanların örgütsel politika algısı ile iş tatminsizliği arasındaki ilişkide duygusal emeğin aracılık rolünü incelemektir. Bu amaçla, İstanbul'da 26 farklı sektörden 387 çalışan üzerinde kesitsel bir araştırma yapılmıştır. Veri dijital anket tekniği ile toplanmış ve doğrusal regresyon testleri ile analiz edilmiştir. Örgütsel politika algısı iş tatminsizliğiyle ve yüzeysel rol yapmayla pozitif bir ilişkiye sahiptir. Yüzeysel rol yapma, örgütsel politika algısı ile iş tatminsizliği arasındaki ilişkiye anlamlı bir şekilde aracılık etmektedir. Beklenenin aksine, derinden rol yapma ile iş tatminsizliği arasında zayıf, pozitif bir ilişki olduğu, doğal duygularla iş tatminsizliği arasında ise anlamlı bir ilişkinin olmadığı görülmüştür. Yüzeysel rol yapma, örgütsel politikanın çalışanlar üzerindeki yıkıcı etkisinin açıklanmasına katkı sağlamaktadır. Katılımcılar, diğer çalışanların politik davranışlarına tepki olarak sahte davranışlar sergilediklerini bildirdiler. Bu, onların iş yerinde sergilenen politik davranışlarla daha iyi başa çıkmalarına yardımcı olmaktadır. Buna göre, çalışanların iş tatminini artırmak etmek için iş yerinde sergilenen politik davranışlar en aza indirilmelidir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *duygusal emek, örgütsel siyaset, iş doyumsuzluğu, yüzeysel rol yapma, derinlemesine rol yapma, doğal duygular, sosyal değişim kuramı, eşitlik kuramı.*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AET : Affective Events Theory

DA : Deep Acting

EL : Emotional Labor

EQ Theory : Equity Theory

HR : Human Resources

IT : Information Technologies

JD Theory : Job Design Theory

JD : Job Dissatisfaction

NFE : Naturally Felt Emotions

POP : Perceptions of Organizational Politics

SA : Surface Acting

SE Theory : Social Exchange Theory

SPSS : Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (used for data analysis, implied from the statistical context)

VE Theory : Value-Percept Theory

α (Alpha) : Cronbach's Alpha (Reliability Coefficient)

1. INTRODUCTION

Organizational politics is a term used to describe how individuals or groups within a company use their influence, power, and tactics to achieve personal goals or gain an advantage, often causing employees to perceive unfairness or inequity in their workplace. This study aims to provide an analysis of how emotional labor mediates the relationship between employees' perceptions of organizational politics (POP) and job dissatisfaction. The primary variables explored are organizational politics perceptions, job dissatisfaction, and emotional labor, which encompass the elements of surface acting, deep acting, and naturally felt emotions (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Diefendorff et al., 2005).

There is a need to conduct this research, as organizational politics may negatively affect the spirit of work, job satisfaction, and retention. According to previous studies, it has been repeatedly demonstrated that POP is also linked to unfavorable outcomes, including reduced organizational commitment, heightened stress levels, and job dissatisfaction (Ferris & Kacmar, 1992; Bedi & Schat, 2013; Miller et al., 2008). Although the impact of political behavior on job attitudes has been identified in some studies (Vigoda, 2000; Harris et al., 2007), there is a lack of research on emotional labor as a mediator mechanism (Gabriel et al., 2023; Hochwarter et al., 2020).

By filling this gap, the study provides insight into how the emotional regulation of employees (surface acting, deep acting, and naturally felt emotions) mediates the relationship between POP and job dissatisfaction (Grandey & Gabriel, 2015). Learning these dynamics enables organizations to develop more effective policies that help mitigate the negative impact of politics on employees within the organization (Cheung & Tang, 2009; Humphrey et al., 2015).

Previous studies have demonstrated that POP leads to high levels of stress, declines in job satisfaction, and reduced organizational commitment (Judge et al., 2017; Parker et al., 1995; Kacmar & Ferris, 1991). Nevertheless, very little is known about how employees can emotionally cope with workplace politics. The current study will contribute to the existing literature by focusing on answering the research question: Can emotional labor strategies explain the adverse effects of POP, such as job dissatisfaction? Consequently, a theoretical framework was developed to understand the most important constructs and their interactions, leading to the formulation of hypotheses. This is followed by the data

analysis and presentation of the findings. Ultimately, contributions were discussed, and recommendations were shared for future research and practice.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Employees' Perceptions of Organizational Politics

Individuals or groups engage in certain behaviors to achieve specific objectives by exploiting power resources to the detriment of others or even organizational goals (Ferris et al., 2002). These behaviors are political behaviors. Organizational politics encompasses forming power coalitions, managing organizational impressions, making strategic choices, and utilizing both formal and informal organizational ties to gain self or group benefits further (Elbanna, 2016). As much as political activities are inherent in organizations, how employees perceive these behaviors influences several key factors, including job satisfaction, organizational commitment, health, and performance (Vigoda, 2000). Knowledge of these perceptions is crucial because they influence how employees perceive their work environment and respond to other forms of workplace politics.

Ferris and Kacmar (1992) introduced the concept of perceptions of organizational politics as a perspective for explaining how employees experience organizational politics. Their research highlighted that these employees do not merely observe political strategies; they also assess such behaviors based on their perceptions and beliefs regarding whether they are self-serving or not within their organization. According to Ferris and Kacmar (1992), these perceptions of politics exhibit a robust positive correlation with the amount of harm inflicted on the organization and its employees (Kirjonen & Hänninen, 1986). This framework served as the basis for many subsequent examinations of how employees experience and address organizational politics.

The formulation of the perceptions of organizational politics framework was based on advanced knowledge concerning political activity in organizations, which had been previously documented by Farrell and Petersen (1982). They described various forms of political behavior in organizations and pointed out that political behavior is not always negative; it can be positive or negative depending on employees' attitudes. They stressed that organizational politics are pretty evident within the workplace, and personal perceptions, anticipations, and organizational ethos precondition workers' responses to these political actions. This early work laid the groundwork for subsequent research on how employees form perceptions of these political actions and their impact on attitudes.

The development of perceptions of organizational politics continued; eventually, theoretical developments shifted toward investigating the sequential effects of such perceptions on employee outcomes. The original form of perceptions of organizational politics was developed by Ferris et al. (2002) to encompass other negative impacts on employee outcomes, including job satisfaction, stress, and turnover intentions. The authors claimed that one's political behaviors at the workplace make others feel that the authority manipulated the decision-making process, thus denying them trust in management and cultivating cynicism. As you will have noticed, these perceptions can lead to poor employee morale and productivity.

Miller et al. (2008) compared the effects of perceptions of organizational politics on job satisfaction, stress levels, and turnover intentions. Their results supported the idea that political behaviors are perceived negatively by employees. They would have several adverse effects on the employee and the organization. They also proposed that some personal characteristics, including political astuteness, stress hardiness, and the psychological profile of the employees, can mediate perceptions of organizational politics. For instance, politically aware individuals may perceive such political behaviors as less negative, while those who are politically unaware may feel the negative impacts more acutely.

Furthermore, DuBrin (2009) studied workplace political behavior and its organizational functions. He defined political behavior as an irreversible process within organizations. However, how employees interpret this behavior and their attitude toward it can vary significantly. He pointed out that some employees consider it a standard practice to engage in political activities, while others view it as a form of political manipulation. These distinctive perceptions again underscore the significance of perceptions of organizational politics, as they influence employees' relationships with organizational politics and the politics within particular organizations. Sinha et al. (1998) provided one of the best descriptions of the impact of POP through their Cumulative Index of Political Perception, which assessed the level of POP influencing overall employee satisfaction with their jobs and their organizations. Vigoda (2000) focused on the effects of political perceptions on a range of attitudinal outcomes, including job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and psychological well-being. She believes that employees' perceived organizational politics signify frustration, anxiety, and mistrust, which imputes inferiority

to employees. Such emotional responses can affect learning by being associated with low levels of participation, a lack of commitment to the organization, and physical and mental exhaustion. In a way, her research highlighted the need to understand how attitudes towards politics within an organization can influence the improvement or deterioration of the work environment, and are open to meeting the need for a healthy work environment. Subsequent research has also extended the development of POP. Hochwarter et al. (2020) addressed the history, current status, and future research agendas. They pointed out that although the current literature describes the various detrimental impacts of POP on employees, there is still limited knowledge on how organizations can manage political behavior in the workplace by enhancing communication, leadership practices, and organization policies. They also noted that the effect of POP is contingent on the organization's environment, personal characteristics, and societal factors, including economic and cultural factors. Therefore, the POP is a vital component of organizational experience or process that is likely to influence the attitudes and behaviors of people in organizations. POP has offered a wealth of knowledge on how employees perceive political behavior and how, in turn, these perceptions affect job satisfaction, commitment, and organizational well-being. Scholars such as Farrell and Petersen (1982), Miller et al. (2008), DuBrin (2009), and Vigoda (2000) have contributed to the ongoing literature by highlighting the need for organizations to understand the organizational consequences of POP. It is reasonable to assume that future investigations, as suggested by Hochwarter et al. (2020), will focus on methods for minimizing the detrimental effects of POP and fostering an equitable and favorable organizational climate.

2.1.1. Theories Used to Explain Mechanisms of Employees' Perceptions of Organizational Politics

Researchers have mainly used two theories to explain employees' perceptions of organizational politics: Blau's social exchange theory (1964) and Adams's equity theory (1965).

2.1.1.1. Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory, a micro theory, will be employed because it assumes that social behavior is a product of an exchange process wherein preferences are given to what is perceived as the most significant gains with the lowest possible costs in social

relationships. From an organizational perspective, this theory posits that employees and the organization, or co-employees, negotiate for the reciprocation of something in return for something different (Blau, 1964). The foundation for the theory is that people's association and behavior with one another are driven by cost-benefit analysis and reciprocity.

According to Blau (2017), social structures are established through interactions between individuals within a given society, with the resulting structures reflecting the exchanges between people. As it benefits from trust and loyalty in relationships through years of repeated exchange, it promises people at least reliance on fair dealings.

The fundamental propositions of social exchange theory include:

1. **Reciprocity:** People expect the organization or other employees to reciprocate with something of equal value in return.
2. **Reward vs. Cost:** People use a cost-benefit basis to determine the qualities of their interpersonal relationships, considering factors such as recognition, support, effort, and risk.
3. **Mutual Benefit:** When the two parties consent, exchange relationships work well.

Social exchange theory is often used to understand POP because employees evaluate these interactions within an organizational and political setting in terms of an exchange. When the quality aspect of the exchange relationship is viewed as inequitable or manipulated, for example, when rewards are given for politically connected reasons, organizational politicization is perceived as being strongly influenced (Ferris & Kacmar, 1992). The theory stimulates an understanding of why employees are sensitive to political actions within organizations, as they perceive these actions as distorting reciprocal transactions in the workplace. The social exchange theory explains how employees approach and respond to political activities within an organization. Should employees feel that power is unlimited and favors the 'politically perceptive', there will be manifestations like reduced job satisfaction and turnover intentions among the employees (Ferris & Kacmar, 1992; Blau, 1964).

2.1.1.2. Equity Theory

Equity Theory is a framework that explains how people perceive fairness in their relationships with organizations. According to the theory, employees judge how fairly they are treated based on how their inputs (effort, time, skills, and expertise) relate to their outcomes (rewards, recognition, salary, and promotion). Equity exists when employees perceive the relative value of what they contribute in exchange for the rewards they receive. However, when there is an imbalance, employees perceive that their contribution is being taken away from them more than others receive for theirs, and they see inequity (Leventhal, 1980). In an organizational context, employees often compare their input to output with what their colleagues are achieving. For example, they may think that their peers are getting paid more for the same or less effort, or that they are being paid less for their efforts that seem worthwhile. With a view of inequity comes perceptions of dissatisfaction and lower job satisfaction. When employees perceive inequity, they are more likely to disengage and take action to balance it out by reducing their work effort, seeking higher rewards, or complaining to management (Dawkins, 2024). Applying equity theory to perceptions of organizational politics helps explain why employees might consider certain political behaviors unfair or biased. Let us suppose that if some employees are given rewards, promotions, or recognition based on political connections rather than merit, other employees may have their work devalued or unappreciated (Harris et al., 2007). They are likely to harbor negative attitudes toward the organization and the leadership. Those who view political behavior as influencing the fairness of decision-making are likely to feel dissatisfied, demotivated, and cynical about their work environment (Offergelt et al., 2019). Inequity beyond dissatisfaction can erode trust and commitment to management, ultimately undermining the organization's integrity. Employees who believe a decision is based on favoritism or political deal-making rather than their merit and fairness will lose confidence in the organization's integrity. This means they could also become disengaged, experience higher stress levels, and have higher-than-normal turnover intentions. In this context, understanding the role of equity theory in shaping perceptions of organizational politics is crucial because perceptions of unfairness can significantly impact employee satisfaction, morale, and performance (McElligott, 2001).

2.1.2. Consequences of Employees' Perceptions of Organizational Politics

Employees' perceptions of organizational politics can affect individuals and organizations. Parker et al. (1995) noted that these effects may interact in various ways and relate to a broad range of aspects, including employee conduct, satisfaction, commitment, stress levels, and performance. If an employee perceives politics in the workplace, the individual will be subjected to high job stress and anxiety. This stress results from the political dynamics in the relationships, often making one feel insecure about their job and the prospects for a further stay in the organization (Ferris & Kacmar, 1992). From a work motivation perspective, organizational justice may evoke feelings of inequity, where employees perceive that their contributions are not being adequately recognized by management, resulting in job dissatisfaction (Brown & Holmes, 1983; Ferris & Kacmar, 1992). Feeling underrated and operating in a politically charged environment can lower employees' morale and erode their trust in their supervisor and the company (Kacmar & Ferris, 1991). Moreover, the perceptions of organizational politics are also known to harm employee job satisfaction. People aware of high-level politics may think they can only advance up the corporate ladder, get promoted, or receive other incentives if they curry favor with a specific employee, executive, manager, or a group with decision-making authority. It can demotivate employees and instill a dampened attitude toward their work. Thus, the necessity for politics becomes timely, as employees witness political behaviors being prioritized over meritocracy, productivity, and competency. The workplace becomes morale-crushing, lowering job satisfaction and increasing turnover intentions (Bedi & Schat, 2013).

Employees' perceptions of organizational politics influence the quality of interpersonal relationships, communication, and interpersonal interactions within the organization. By perceiving politics in the workplace, people develop suspicion against others, which is unhealthy for forming teams and collaboration. This weakens trust. Employees may become reluctant to fully contribute their ideas or efforts, as they are concerned that their contributions will be used to undermine them or that others will take credit for them. Relationships characterized by mistrust can hinder creativity and innovation, as employees are denied opportunities to take risks and make new suggestions (Ferris & Kacmar, 1992). This results in a decrease in the organization's outputs and achievements. The energy and effort required for essential work functions are often diverted to political

activities within the workplace, such as persuasion, lobbying, and networking. This shift needs to be done carefully and with a plan in mind. In certain situations, it can result in a general decline in total workforce productivity and effectiveness. Organizational politics, as perceived by employees, can lead to stress and dissatisfaction, ultimately contributing to burnout. This would eliminate individual and organizational productivity (Bedi & Schat, 2013).

Vigoda (2000) noted that the potential long-term consequences of perceived organizational politics include unending disillusionment, ultimately leading to a toxic work environment. This toxicity can exacerbate the deterioration of the organizational climate, which is challenging to improve. Kacmar and Baron (1999) also noted that organizations with high levels of perceived politics face difficulties in retaining employees and a dedicated workforce, which is crucial for sustainability. Henne and Locke (1985) elaborated on the other effects of job dissatisfaction due to perceptions of politics. They discovered that dissatisfied employees are most likely to engage in strategies that are detrimental to work, such as absenteeism, tardiness, and even sabotage. It not only impacts performance at the personal level but also extends to working in teams within an organization, thereby affecting organizational productivity (José Chambel & Sobral, 2011). Likewise, adverse outcomes may also be associated with perceived politics when they occur in organizations. Political perceptions can significantly impact an organization, replacing harmony with animosity and competitiveness, rather than helping the organization achieve its goals. Such a culture may weaken an organization’s ability to guarantee that resources are effectively channeled towards the achievement of focal objectives and aims as the decisions regarding their allocation are distorted and driven not so much by the organizational policies and procedures that are most beneficial to an organization and its goals and strategies but by the self-interests of the organization’s members (Vigoda, 2000). Furthermore, such circumstances lead to increased politicization of the organization, which negatively affects its employees' overall perception of the organization. This perception may limit the organization's ability to attract and retain top talent. Employees may prefer to join organizations that stick to meritocracy and fairness frameworks. Moreover, other employees who have already been hired may experience employee turnover, which can lead to organizational instability and even a decline in organizational performance (Wen et al., 2019). Ultimately, it can be stated that perceptions of organizational politics may have significant and profound

implications for both employees and the organization. Discontentment can lead to increased job stress, dissatisfaction, lower organizational commitment, poor employee relations, and reduced productivity at both the individual and organizational levels. Eliminating and managing these perceptions enables organizational leaders to create, maintain, and advance a positive work environment that produces both effective and equitable employee outcomes and organizational performance (Bedi & Schat, 2013).

2.2. Job Dissatisfaction

Also known as job dissatisfaction, employees' negative feelings or attitudes toward their jobs are often caused by unmet expectations, needs, or desires (Judge et al., 2017). This can be recognized in several ways, including lower motivation, lower morale, poor performance, and a higher risk of turnover (José Chambel & Sobral, 2011). A classic example of job dissatisfaction is the misalignment between what an employee thinks they should receive from their job (fair compensation, recognition, and growth opportunities) Parker and what they receive.

The concept of job dissatisfaction has been extensively studied over the past few decades, dating back to early work in organizational psychology. In the 1950s and 1960s, researchers recognized that negative constraints and employee attitudes could have a significant impact on organizational outcomes, including performance, turnover, and productivity. Herzberg et al. (1959) developed one of the earliest models of job dissatisfaction, known as the Two Factor Theory, which posits that distinct factors determine satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Herzberg states that the presence of motivating factors, including achievement, recognition, and the nature of the work, contributes to job satisfaction. However, the absence of hygiene factors, including salary, working conditions, and company policies, contributes to job dissatisfaction. Herzberg emphasized that dissatisfaction arises when hygiene factors are insufficient, even if they exist (Yousaf, 2019). Herzberg (1957) and Locke (1976) expanded on Herzberg's work, extending the understanding of job dissatisfaction to discrepancies between employees' expectations and the reality of their job environment. According to Locke’s (1976) Value Percept Theory, job dissatisfaction occurs when employees perceive a lack of value in the outcomes related to their work (Banerjee & Mehta, 2016). For instance, dissatisfaction typically arises when employees desire recognition but do not feel they receive it enough. This theory generates the subjective nature of this dissatisfaction and the role played by

personal hovering and beliefs (Van der Schyff et al., 2018). According to Spector (1997), job dissatisfaction occurs when there is a lack of fairness, poor leadership, and unfulfilled personal needs. His model helped identify key job dimensions. Dimensions that contribute to perceived dissatisfaction, such as pay, promotion opportunities, and supervisor relationships, influence dissatisfaction.

According to the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), employees perceive their relationship with their organization as an exchange. A fair return on the investments of effort and skills is what we expect employees to invest as well. Employees who perceive that their work does not give them a fair return become dissatisfied. Additionally, the equity theory (Adams, 1965) is based on the assumption that the ratio of effort to outcome determines fairness and whether we perceive our work effort as fair compared to that of others. If employees make more effort for the same or less return than their colleagues, they are likely to be dissatisfied (Polk, 2022). Moreover, the affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) posits that job dissatisfaction stems from the emotions associated with workplace events. Workplace experiences, such as how employees interact with one another or with leadership, shape an employee's overall feelings (i.e., satisfaction or dissatisfaction). For instance, a negative experience with an overseer can lead to feelings of sadness, even in other significant aspects of the job (Weiss et al., 1999). Job characteristics theory (Hackman & Oldham, 1976) also explains that job satisfaction is determined by how the job is designed. High-skill variety, task significance, autonomy, and feedback are associated with higher job satisfaction in jobs that offer these elements. Low-skill variety, low task significance, low autonomy, and low feedback are associated with job dissatisfaction. This theory emphasizes that the desire to prevent dissatisfaction and increase employee motivation hinges upon the practice of job design (Oldham & Hackman, 2005).

2.2.1. Antecedents of Job Dissatisfaction

Perceptions of organizational politics are known to contribute significantly to employees' job dissatisfaction. These perceptions arise when subordinates perceive that decisions in the workplace are influenced by biases, self-serving tendencies, and the hasty use of power and authority, rather than by merit and capability. Miller et al. (2008) revealed the relationship between POP and negative job attitudes, including job dissatisfaction. A high level of perceived politics creates frustration and mistrust. Then, it decreases the

employees' morale, negatively affecting their job satisfaction and commitment to the organization.

Wang and Wang (2020) found that the effect of emotional labor on job burnout was significant when employee cannot replenish their supply of psychological capital effectively. This burnout, as defined by exhaustion and cynicism, is a direct precursor to job dissatisfaction, where employees become mentally and physically exhausted. Another antecedent of job satisfaction is a lack of perceived organizational support. Wen et al. (2019) investigated how perceived support could mitigate dissatisfaction by improving employees' emotional intelligence and labor management. A lack of support leads to feelings of loneliness and a sense of worthlessness, making employees less happy and less inclined to work hard. When an organization lacks adequate resources and support, it often results in job dissatisfaction, as employees feel they cannot perform their job efficiently.

Work conditions such as stress, high workload, and stressful tasks have been found to cause mental health difficulties, hence low morale and dissatisfaction. Current culture pressures professionals to balance two worlds: mental health and job responsibilities; the results are often dissatisfaction, burnout, and, in some cases, turnover as people seek better and healthier working conditions (Rössler, 2012). Parker et al. (1995) determined that perceptions of inequity regarding rewards and promotions were powerful predictors of job dissatisfaction. Employees who believe that rewards are being shared inequitably or that promotions are based on their manager’s relationships rather than their performance levels are likely to lose interest in their organizational affiliation. This invariably results in reduced motivation levels and enhanced negative job attitudes. Rousseau (1997) explained that the goal is to combat dissatisfaction. The new organizational age has shifted towards contractual, flexible working arrangements and a focus on work-life balance. Those who do not provide this flexibility, especially in exceptionally challenging jobs, risk having their employees fatigued and stressed due to lowered employee well-being as they battle to balance work and family responsibilities. The organization's climate and culture contribute significantly to job satisfaction. The adverse organizational climate was evident in high levels of conflict, a lack of cohesion, and poor employee communication, all of which were linked to high levels of dissatisfaction. Vigoda (2000) attempted to analyze the effects of organizational climate

on job attitudes and found that many people believe an adverse climate fosters suspicion and disinterest, leading to job dissatisfaction. Employees in such situations are bound to develop low organizational esteem, perceived organizational support, and, consequently, low organizational commitment.

Jayanthi and Arumugam (2019) found that employees who feel no control over their work or work for someone who micromanages them tend to be dissatisfied with their jobs. Empowerment for employees occurs when they are given the autonomy to make decisions. However, overly controlling or supervising work can lessen employees' feelings of competence, which is dissatisfying. For instance, an employee who is constantly told precisely how to perform each assigned task and has almost no ability to make independent decisions will likely become disgruntled, disengaged, and unhappy about their job. Belias et al. (2015) identified the high impact of leadership style on job satisfaction. Job satisfaction among employees working under authoritarian or ineffective leaders is lower than among those who work under transformational or supportive leaders. Dissatisfaction is often created by poor leadership, which fosters uncertainty and distrust, causing employees to feel unsupported or undervalued. One example is an employee working under a manager who does not provide regular feedback, fails to acknowledge their work, or makes arbitrary decisions without consulting them. Probst (2008) found that job insecurity is an important antecedent to job dissatisfaction. Anxiety and dissatisfaction tend to occur among employees who feel their jobs are insecure, often due to organizational changes stemming from restructuring or a lack of career advancement opportunities. Feeling stressed, fearful, and mentally preoccupied with anything except work often occurs due to uncertainty about your future position. For instance, employees in the department frequently experienced layoffs and restructuring. They feel anxious about being sacked, as their work or environment would not be satisfactory. Glicken and Robinson (2013) found that when employees are unclear about their tasks or how to perform them, job dissatisfaction is likely to result. Such situations are experienced by employees who are unsure of what to expect from their work and those whose job demands often conflict with each other, causing frustration and confusion. Clear communication and well-defined job roles can mitigate these feelings. For example, employees with vague instructions for their tasks or constantly facing changes in their job responsibilities can become confused about their roles, uninspired to deliver, and dissatisfied with their work. Paul and Omari (2015) discovered that workplace bullying

and harassment, though physical, verbal, or emotional, can lead to job dissatisfaction. Bullying is experienced by or witnessed by employees who can feel unsafe, unsupported, and disrespected. The result of this toxic environment is emotional distress, stress, and a terrible lowering of one's job satisfaction. An employee might be isolated, anxious, and dissatisfied with their job if they experience continuous verbal abuse or have been constantly left out of important team discussions by a colleague.

2.3. Perceptions of Organizational Politics and Job Dissatisfaction

Organizational politics occur at work when individuals or groups utilize their power and influence to achieve their own or the group's objectives, often at the expense of others or the organization's goals (Ferris et al., 2002). How employees see organizational politics (POP) significantly impacts their feelings and results at work. Often, employees believe that unfair decision-making is linked to company politics. People feel unfairly treated when they think that raises, prizes, or recognitions are given based on favors or personal connections rather than ability (Harris et al., 2007). Equity Theory (Adams, 1965) supports this finding by suggesting that employees determine if something is fair by comparing the effort, skills, and time they invest with the rewards they receive, such as pay, praise, and promotions. If employees believe that some individuals receive preferential treatment due to their political connections, they will feel neglected and cheated. For instance, if an employee notices a less qualified coworker receiving a raise due to their friendship with management, it can lead to suspicions of bias, which in turn lowers their happiness. This imbalance between effort and reward leads to feelings of anger, detachment, and dissatisfaction with one's job (Parker et al., 1995). According to studies by Ferris et al. (2002) and Vigoda (2000), feeling wrong in politically charged settings can lead to feelings of exploitation and devaluation, which in turn can exacerbate one's unhappiness.

Trust is a crucial component of a good workplace, but how people perceive corporate politics can undermine it. People working for a company may perceive political actions as dishonest or self-serving, leading to doubts about their leaders and coworkers. According to Ferris and Kacmar (1992), this lack of trust makes employees feel helpless, unsafe, and unwilling to do their jobs entirely. Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) provides a framework for understanding this event. According to the idea, employees expect their company to treat them fairly and equally. Employees who perceive that

choices are made based on politics rather than talent often feel that this unspoken social bond has been broken. This perceived loss of faith makes employees angry and cynical because they believe their work and talents are not valued (DuBrin, 2009). Parker et al. (1995) found that mistrust based on perceived politics can lead to psychological insecurity, where employees worry about their job security and fear being punished for not agreeing with political players. This loss of safety makes people very unhappy and less interested in their work.

Many worries and mental tiredness are linked to how people see group politics. Dealing with political situations often requires considerable mental energy from employees, who must maintain appearances and relationships. This can lead to burnout. Vigoda (2000) showed that POP often leads to anger, worry, and mistrust, all of which are bad for employees' mental health and make them unhappy at work. It is also important to consider mental work in this connection. Hochschild (1983) and Grandey and Gabriel (2015) found that employees exposed to political behavior often engage in "surface acting," which involves faking their feelings to conform to company standards. This causes emotional conflict. This mismatch between how you feel inside and how you present yourself externally exacerbates stress and dissatisfaction. When employees are under prolonged mental stress, they may feel tired, less motivated, and less likely to feel they have accomplished anything, which further diminishes their job satisfaction (Banerjee & Mehta, 2016).

Perceived organizational politics hurt corporate dedication by creating an environment of unfairness and favoritism. When employees believe that political maneuvering, rather than skill, determines job advancement, they lose faith in the company's fairness. This disappointment leads to a decrease in commitment to the organization's goals and a decline in confidence (Bedi & Schat, 2013). People who work in highly charged settings often experience low moods because they believe their efforts are not appreciated or acknowledged. Miller et al. (2008) suggest that employees who experience significant political involvement at work are more likely to become frustrated and lose interest in their jobs. They lose motivation to do their jobs, which makes them less productive and more likely to quit. Additionally, a culture of favoritism makes people less likely to collaborate and trust one another, instead fostering competition and hostility (Hochwarter et al., 2020). The Social Exchange Theory emphasizes this relationship. Employees who

believe their relationship with the company is unfair or lacks equal respect are less likely to be loyal or put in extra effort. Employees are unhappy because they feel disconnected from the organization's goals and are ignored by leadership due to this break in reciprocity.

An increasing number of studies are supporting the link between POP and job dissatisfaction. Ferris et al. (2002) said that employees who are aware of politics are less satisfied with their jobs because they feel they are being used and manipulated. Miller et al. (2008) conducted a meta-analysis that revealed a strong association between high levels of POP and negative job attitudes, including unhappiness, stress, and reduced company commitment. Similarly, Vigoda (2000) noted that people's perceptions of politics can make the workplace toxic, leading to distrust, reduced teamwork, and increased plans to leave. The study reveals that these ideas not only harm people's health but also hinder the success of organizations by reducing employee engagement and efficiency.

Understanding how POP affects job dissatisfaction makes it even more crucial for companies to address political behavior before it escalates. To mitigate the perception of bias, leaders should foster open decision-making processes and equitable employee compensation practices. A more welcoming and supportive workplace can also be created by teaching managers how to identify and address the effects of company politics. Politics can negatively impact job satisfaction, but improving communication, promoting fairness, and investing in leadership development can help mitigate these effects. According to Hochwarter et al. (2020), companies that value fairness and openness are more likely to retain loyal employees and maintain a positive work environment. Based on this rationale, the following hypothesis is developed.

Hypothesis 1: There is a positive relationship between employees' perceptions of organizational politics and job dissatisfaction.

2.4. Emotional Labor

Emotional labor refers to the use of employees to regulate their emotions in order to meet the required emotional standards of the workplace (Hochschild, 1983). This definition involves displaying specific feelings within the system while not experiencing these emotions (Grandey & Gabriel, 2015). The term originated in the work of pioneering

sociologist Arlie Hochschild in her book *The Managed Heart* (1983). Hochschild examined, within this work, how some forms of work increasingly placed emotional demands on employees, especially in situations characterized by direct contact with clients or customers. In service sector organizations, particularly in tasks involving emotional labor, employees must consistently display positive emotions toward customers (Nguyen & Stinglhamber, 2020).

Hochschild's (1983) original conceptualization of emotional labor distinguishes between two types of emotional labor: surface acting and deep acting. Surface acting refers to pretending to feel something an employee does not, whereas deep acting refers to attempting to experience emotions your position requires you to do (Hochschild, 1983; Grandey & Gabriel, 2015). The most damaging side effect of surface acting is emotional dissonance, a mismatch between the emotional state the employee is in and the emotional pitch they need to present to others. Frequent misalignment between actual and mimicked feelings can result in burnout or job dissatisfaction (Hochschild, 1983; Grandey & Gabriel, 2015; Henne & Locke, 1985). Primarily, emotional labor emerged in response to the increasing demand for customer service roles. Hochschild (1980) noted that employees in service organizations, such as airlines and hospitality, are expected to regulate their emotions perfectly. These industries began to require employees to perform tasks while maintaining a professional demeanor and ensuring customer satisfaction. It represented a turning point toward building a view of work's psychological and emotional demands that had never been considered (Weeks, 2011).

Hochschild (1983) laid the groundwork for the study of emotional labor, and the concept has continued to evolve in subsequent research. Grandey and Gabriel (2015) further refine their argument by highlighting the importance of emotional regulation to employee performance and well-being. Building on Hochschild's (1983) framework, Grandey (2000) expanded the discussion regarding the difference between surface acting and deep acting to the well-being of employees. She found that deep acting, or playing emotions that you are trying to feel out, produces fewer psychological side effects than surface acting — playing emotionally inappropriate emotions.

Building on Hochschild (1983), emotional labor has been further studied in terms of the psychological costs associated with surface acting, as well as emotional dissonance. When employees feel obligated to act in a way that contradicts their true feelings,

dissonance causes stress and burnout. In high-contact service roles, where daily emotional regulation is required, managerial work on emotional demands and the emotional outcomes of a job can have implications for both emotional exhaustion and job dissatisfaction, as noted by Grandey and Gabriel (2015) and Gabriel et al. (2023). However, emotional labor does not always produce negative consequences. For example, Humphrey et al. (2015) noted that emotional labor can be beneficial for employees if they successfully regulate their emotions while delivering high-quality service to a customer. Having the ability to manage one's emotions and the social and emotional skills necessary to navigate emotionally charged situations, not only for the firm's sake but also for themselves, is correlated with higher job satisfaction and lower burnout. Employees with greater competence are more effectively able to manage their emotions, which in turn reduces their likelihood of experiencing negative consequences, such as job dissatisfaction or stress (Gabriel et al., 2023). According to Rousseau (1997), technical skills and emotional competencies are equally important in organizations today. She emphasizes that organizations must recognize their responsibility in supporting employees in managing emotional labor healthily and productively.

It is evident, especially in service-oriented industries, that emotional labor is a complex and important part of work life. Hochschild (1983) initially laid the foundation for understanding how emotional regulation is central to employee performance and well-being. Building on this, as Grandey and Gabriel (2015) and Humphrey et al. (2015) have demonstrated, recent research on emotional regulation has expanded the concept and shown how it affects job satisfaction, burnout, and overall employee health. With the rise of the need for emotional labor in organizational settings, organizations must invest adequate support and resources in the employees who are expected to perform this type of labor.

2.4.1. Dimensions of Emotional Labor

The dimensions of emotional labor have evolved as the conceptual construction of the notion has developed. First, surface acting and deep acting were defined as the first two dimensions of emotional labor. Hochschild (1983) was the first to propose these two dimensions. Later, research developed this framework, introducing a third dimension: naturally felt emotions (Brook et al., 2013). According to Hochschild (1983), surface acting is faking emotions. This is emotional labor in its most basic form, where employees

display emotions they do not feel, but force their faces to show appropriate expressions, their voices take on the appropriate tone, and their bodies convey the appropriate language. Surfacing work can create an emotional mission, where employees are expected to feel genuine emotions, even though they may not genuinely feel them (Grandey & Gabriel, 2015). Deep acting would mean employees consciously trying to experience the emotions the job required. Deep acting is distinct from surface acting, where employees must perform cognitive and emotional work to align their inner emotions with the outer emotions they are expected to display (Brook et al., 2013). Deep acting is less destructive than surface acting because it reduces emotional dissonance (the discrepancy between one's actual feelings and the emotions one pretends to feel) that might otherwise plague employees, compelling them to feel the necessary emotions rather than just appearing to do so.

Hochschild's analysis of the first two dimensions was important, but the development of the concept of emotional labor has progressed over time, taking on several tasks stimulated by other scholars. The theory also underwent a significant development: recognizing a third dimension, namely, naturally felt emotions. Grandey and Gabriel (2015) introduced a third dimension of emotional labor by incorporating the role of authentic, naturally occurring emotions in the workplace. Naturally felt emotions differ from surface and deep-acting emotions because employees have spontaneous and genuine feelings during work interactions without needing regulation or modification. These feelings flare up from the employee's time on the job, not felt and created to serve organizational goals. By incorporating this third dimension, they highlight the importance of emotional authenticity in the workplace and how this component enhances the emotional labor framework, facilitating an understanding of how employees manage their emotions in response to organizational pressures (Grandey & Gabriel, 2015). Below, these dimensions are explained in detail.

2.4.1.1. Surface Acting

When employees act out, their emotions are not changed from the inside. However, they adjust their facial expressions and body language to convey the emotions required by the job (Hochschild, 1983). Surface acting involves pretending or concealing genuine emotions to display artificial feelings that align with organizational norms and expectations (Grandey & Gabriel, 2015). Employees often fake their emotions at work,

pretending to be calm when, in fact, they are annoyed, such as when attending to a customer. Surface acting is most common in jobs that involve numerous social interactions, such as those with clients, as seen in professions like mental health work, where appropriate emotions are considered contagious (Rössler, 2012).

Surface acting leads to negative consequences concerning job satisfaction and organizational commitment. There is evidence that people who constantly put on a happy front often end up dissatisfied due to the continual effort. This constant policing of emotions can gradually erode the authentic sense of organizational commitment, as people may feel that their genuine selves and feelings are not appreciated or acknowledged (Rousseau, 1997). According to Wang et al. (2020), surface acting has adverse effects on employees' perceptions of human resource practices. When people engage in surface acting, they may perceive human resources management practices and policies as detrimental or unsuitable. Such a perception can further reduce their job satisfaction and put them at a high risk of burnout (Wang & Wang, 2020). Coetzer (2007) discovered the consequences of surface acting in the context of workplace learning cultures. The researcher concluded that surface-act employees are likely to perceive their organizations' contexts as less supportive of learning and development. The demands of the persona reduce the mental capacity considered crucial in learning and, hence, other professional development activities (Coetzer, 2007). According to Gandz and Murray (1980), employees may employ surface acting to navigate organizational politics. Thus, while creating a cheerful façade, employees can position themselves in favor of influential individuals or a particular group to gain support (Gandz & Murray, 1980). This action may foster a culture of pretense and erode credibility, thereby increasing organizational complexity (Gandz & Murray, 1980). Meyer and Allen (2001) have mentioned that surface acting decreases affective commitment because the employee's efforts in performing the required emotions do not correspond to their attitude towards the organization. This misalignment can lead to decreased motivation and increased intentions to turnover (Meyer & Allen, 2001). Surface acting is viewed as a tactic to navigate politics. In some circumstances, employees surface act to deal with political realities in the workplace. For example, it may hurt employees' stress levels and well-being due to the constant effort needed to maintain a facade (Bedi & Schat, 2013).

2.4.1.2. Deep Acting

Emotional depth is a dimension of the work aimed at achieving a fit between the employee's private and displayed emotions. While in surface acting, the employee pretends to be a certain way, in deep acting, the employee tries to produce the required feeling for the job description (Hochschild, 1983; Grandey & Gabriel, 2015). This process involves cognitive and emotional work to produce or withhold specific feelings and facilitate the employee's inner self's performance of more genuine affect (Grandey & Gabriel, 2015). Hence, deep acting can be viewed as a less damaging form of emotional labor because it lessens the emotional conflict that stems from inadequate congruency between experienced and displayed emotions (Rössler, 2012). When employees practice deep acting, they attempt to suppress their genuine emotions to conform to the organization's standards and convey a natural portrayal (Rousseau, 1997). This genuine commitment helps employees preserve their ethical self, or core self, thereby enhancing their level of authenticity in the workplace (Humphrey et al., 2015). Deep acting benefits job satisfaction and organizational commitment since it is congruent with the individual's inner feelings (Rousseau, 1997). This alignment reduces the psychological cost of emotional incongruence and enhances the person–work fit, thereby increasing work satisfaction. Because people who engage in deep acting are perceived as more genuine and competent in their communication, there are likely to be improvements in staff or customer relations (Wang et al., 2020). Deep acting can help mitigate the negative effects and consequences of emotional labor, such as stress and burnout. By experiencing the emotions required for the job, the employee can reduce the effort needed to comprehend what emotions are expected and the deception often seen in surface acting. This genuine emotional involvement is capable of enhancing both employees' state of well-being and the quality of their work (Rössler, 2012). Coetzer (2007) established that deep acting creates a positive learning environment in a workplace. It was postulated that deep acting enhances employees' predisposition for learning and development activities when attached to work-related emotions. These revelations can enhance organizational citizenship behaviors and improve professional development and job fulfillment (Coetzer, 2007). Deep acting enhances the way employees handle organizational politics. In addition, recognizing that effective politicians must act emotionally and experience the appropriate emotions in specific situations, employees can develop more effective and trustworthy relationships with their colleagues and supervisors. This means that people

are more authentic, resulting in a smoother, more cooperative work culture (Gandz & Murray, 1980). Deep acting facilitated the improvement of organizational commitment among people. They recommended that employees develop a deeper commitment to the corporate entity when taking action. This can increase employees' psychological ownership and decrease turnover intentions, as organizational members feel more committed to their jobs and workplace (Meyer & Allen, 2001). Bedi and Schat (2013) reveal that deep acting can mitigate the impact of organizational politics on employee well-being. Thus, by recognizing and addressing these emotions, the stress arising from the identified workplace politics can be managed, thereby enhancing employees' psychological well-being.

2.4.1.3. Naturally Felt Emotions

Naturally felt emotions refer to the spontaneous and genuine emotions that employees experience and express during their work interactions. Unlike surface and deep acting, which involve regulating emotions to conform to organizational expectations, naturally felt emotions are authentic and not manipulated (Hochschild, 1983; Grandey & Gabriel, 2015). These emotions naturally arise from the employee's interactions and experiences within the workplace, requiring no conscious effort to modify or fake.

As Rousseau (1997) explained, personal emotions are indispensable in maintaining friendly interpersonal relationships and making employees' communication seem more genuine. This affects social relationships by fostering trusting working relationships with employees of different ranks and grades, as well as customers, targets, and buyers (Humphrey et al., 2015). It enhances team dynamics, people's interactions, and employee engagement since the organization and its people acknowledge and appreciate employees' core identities (Wang et al., 2020). Roussler (2012) described how permitting employees to fake their mundane, naturally felt emotions can decrease the pressure and exhaustion correlated to emotional work. By not having to focus on mood management most of the time, these employees can conserve their energy and maintain their psychological well-being (Rössler, 2012). This approach can also help avoid burnout arising from surface-acting and deep-acting (Rössler, 2012). Wang et al. (2020) suggest that natural effects have a positive impact on employees' perceptions of human resource management practices. When employees believe that nobody will punish them for the emotions they convey, they will perceive human resource management policies as

favorable, which in turn boosts job satisfaction and organizational commitment. It is essential to foster supportive cultures in the workplace. Coetzer (2007) discussed the permissiveness of felt emotions for an effective learning environment. Persons encouraged to display demonstrative effects will likely utilize reflective processes, including communication, to learn and grow (Coetzer, 2007). This encourages creativity and innovation because the environment is implicitly safe for employees to share their ideas and experiences (Coetzer, 2007). Similarly, Gandz and Murray (1980) thought that naturally experienced feelings help map the organization's political landscape because they promote real experience. Although the emotions displayed to colleagues are genuine and not feigned, there is an improvement in mutual respect and honesty among employees, as well as a reduction in acts of emotional manipulation, as noted by Gandz and Murray (1980). Such authenticity can mitigate the ill effects of organizational politics and make the work environment more pleasant (Gandz & Murray, 1980). Meyer and Allen (2001) noted that natural emotions within the organization can boost the level of commitment. Those who can act unreservedly are likely to develop a more significant emotional commitment to the organization because employees feel valued and aptly reciprocated. This attachment may lower turnover intentions and enhance employee commitment. Bedi and Schat (2013) discovered the moderating role of natural effect, suggesting that it can mitigate the detrimental effects of organizational politics on staff. It was also found that when staff are permitted to be more authentic, it decreases the stress and pressure experienced due to the assessment of organizational politics. Such authenticity enhances the employees' well-being, organizational commitment, happiness levels, and job satisfaction.

2.4.2. Antecedents of Emotional Labor

Understanding how and why emotional labor arises is essential to developing effective managerial practices in the workplace. Several researchers have identified predictors and antecedents that determine why and how employees engage in emotional labor. Grandey and Gabriel (2015) highlighted that job autonomy is a significant antecedent of emotional labor. Employees with high job autonomy have more control over their work environment and emotional expressions, which can lead to increased deep acting and reduced surface acting. Job autonomy allows employees to manage their emotions more effectively, enhancing their well-being and performance. Humphrey et al. (2015) identified

personality traits, such as emotional intelligence, as essential predictors of emotional labor. Employees with high emotional intelligence are better equipped to manage their emotions and engage in deep acting, resulting in more authentic and effective emotional displays. This trait enables employees to navigate the emotional demands of their jobs more effectively, thereby reducing the negative impacts of emotional labor. Coetzer (2007) emphasized that organizational culture continues to have a significant influence on emotional labor. When the organizational culture is adopted to support and respect employees, individuals can naturally express their emotions and engage in deep acting. Such a culture can enhance organizational commitment, increase employee engagement, and reduce the incidence of burnout resulting from management's demand for artificial emotions. According to Wang et al. (2020), when employees have a very positive perception of their organization, such as the way the organization acknowledges their efforts and concerns for their welfare, they are more likely to use deep acting and display authentic feelings (Wang et al., 2020). This support minimizes the level of surface acting and consequently minimizes the negative impacts, which include burnout and job dissatisfaction. Gandz and Murray (1980) addressed that relational demands are reported to influence emotional labor. Good relations with subordinates and supervisors can minimize surface acting, allowing people to express genuine emotions. The employees' positive affective reactions entail trust and mutual respect, which lead to genuine feelings experienced at the workplace, thereby improving job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Meyer and Allen (2001) have also elaborated on how job security affects emotional labor. They state that employees who are well-integrated into the company and feel secure in their jobs can perform deep acting and display genuine emotions in front of others without the apprehension of being fired, which is why this researcher supports the hypothesis for deep acting. Job security ensures that employees will not leave, so they will not be forced to fake it, and therefore, they will be healthier and happier in their jobs. Bedi and Schat (2013) noted that the primary drivers of emotional labor are the beliefs of justice and fairness in organizational functioning. Employees who perceive their organization as having a fair policy tend to display dispositional empathy and are more likely to act profoundly and authentically. This perception of fairness decreases the emotional cost of surface acting and increases job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Bedi & Schat, 2013).

2.4.3. Consequences of Emotional Labor

The consequences of emotional labor are no less important. Emotional efforts to meet the job demands affect employee well-being, job performance, and organizational outcomes. The multifaceted consequences of emotional labor depend on the type of emotional regulation employed (i.e., surface acting, deep acting, or naturally felt emotions). Research has shown that emotional labor can yield positive and negative outcomes. For example, burnout is one of the most common manifestations of emotional labor (Lee & Madera, 2019). In particular, surface-acting employees are especially prone to emotional exhaustion because they must fake emotions at every moment while performing their work that are not aligned with their genuine emotions (Lennard et al., 2019). A prolonged emotional effort can lead to feelings of mental fatigue and leave employees unable to maintain the same level of productivity. Emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and decreased sense of personal accomplishment are all signs of burnout (Brady et al., 2020). Likewise, Kariou et al. (2021) found that employees coerced into constantly surface-acting could develop higher levels of burnout due to the disruption of emotional harmony. Additionally, the emotional demands of the work can significantly impact how employees perceive their work environment and their role within the organization. In connection with surface acting, it has been found that employees who do not feel connected to their authentic selves tend to be less satisfied with their jobs. On the other hand, deep acting is likely to positively affect job satisfaction, as the act of deep acting feels genuine and aligned with an employee's sense of relatedness (Humphrey et al., 2015). Moreover, those who act out are more likely to become less committed to the organization because they doubt that their authentic self is valued and not recognized by the organization. On the other hand, deep-acting employees generally display a stronger organizational commitment. Deep acting enables employees to express their internal feelings and align them with the functional expectations. Therefore, the emotional ties with the organization become more genuine (Shore & Wayne, 1993). Not surprisingly, employees who practice deep acting tend to be more effective in their roles since they begin to align emotionally with the organization (Chu et al., 2012). Emotional labor can also impact the health and well-being of employees. Managing emotions at work can put physical and mental health at risk, with things such as anxiety, depression, and poor quality of sleep. The consequences of surface acting, in particular, can lead to increased stress, which in turn impacts employees' physical health (Søvold et al., 2021). Cheung and Tang (2009) found

that employees who act authentically are more engaged in learning and development activities in the workplace because the invested emotions help foster the person's professional growth. Chen and Wang (2019) found that employees who frequently engage in surface acting are more likely to experience high turnover intentions, as the emotional burden of their job leads them to desire a job change.

2.5. Mediating Role of Surface Acting

Emotional labor, particularly surface acting, plays a crucial role in how employees manage their emotions at work to meet the company's needs (Hochschild, 1983). Surface acting refers to the practice of altering your emotional expression without altering your internal feelings, which can lead to emotional conflict and mental strain (Grandey, 2003). Perceptions of organizational politics (POP) refer to the views that employees hold about actions taken to benefit themselves at work, such as bias, influence, and secret plans (Ferris et al., 1989). A lot of POP makes the workplace where people feel like they have to control how they act emotionally, often hiding their anger or unhappiness to keep their job and professional relationships safe (Chang et al., 2009). Organizational politics can make the workplace more stressful and unclear (Vigoda-Gadot, 2007), so employees may use acting on the surface as a means to deal with politically charged situations while still adhering to the rules for how to behave at work (Kaplan et al., 2014). This means that employees in political settings are more apt to take public action, which supports the first link in the mediation model.

Surface acting helps people meet the standards of their employers, but it is taxing on the mind and often leads to stress, mental fatigue, and reduced job satisfaction (Hülsheger & Schewe, 2011). Emotional conflict occurs when you conceal your genuine feelings while presenting false ones. This wears down your mental and emotional resources over time (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002). Studies show that employees who engage in much surface acting are less happy and less satisfied with their jobs because their genuine feelings do not align with what they are expected to show (Judge et al., 2020; Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013). Thus, the second link in the mediation model is established: surface behavior leads to people being less satisfied with their jobs.

The mediation model suggests that employees who perceive a high level of politics at work are more likely to engage in surface acting to maintain harmonious relationships with others. However, relying too heavily on surface acting for too long can lead to

emotional exhaustion and decreased job satisfaction. This finding aligns with an earlier study that demonstrated how highly demanding workplaces exacerbate the adverse effects of politics at work on job views (Zhang & Bednall, 2016). Based on this reasoning, hypothesis 2 is developed.

Hypothesis 2: Surface acting significantly mediates the relationship between perceptions of organizational politics and job dissatisfaction, where perceptions of organizational politics are **positively** related to surface acting and surface acting is **positively** related to job dissatisfaction.

2.6. Mediating Role of Deep Acting

Emotional labor involves managing your emotions to meet the demands of your workplace. Deep acting is a proactive method in which employees change their feelings, rather than just altering their appearance (Hochschild, 1983; Grandey, 2003). The idea behind this study is that deep acting serves as a bridge between how people perceive organizational politics (POP) and their level of job dissatisfaction. In particular, employees who believe there is a lot of politics at work may resort to deep acting to cope with the problematic atmosphere. Nevertheless, unlike surface acting, which leaves people feeling emotionally drained and unhappy, deep acting helps individuals feel more in touch with their emotions, making them less susceptible to workplace politics and more satisfied with their jobs (Humphrey et al., 2015).

When employees believe that exchanges at work are based on self-interest, bias, and influence rather than fairness and equality, this phenomenon is referred to as organizational politics (Ferris et al., 1989). Employees often use emotional control techniques in highly political workplaces to maintain professional relationships and unity (Chang et al., 2009). Surface acting is a way of dealing with emotions, while deep acting is a way of coping through actions. People use it to match their feelings with how they should act (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002). Researchers have found that employees in highly charged work environments may use deep acting to maintain good relationships, reduce tension, and protect their professional standing (Liu et al., 2022). So, we can expect a positive connection between POP and deep acting.

Because it allows people to experience genuine emotions, deep acting is associated with reduced emotional fatigue and improved well-being compared to surface acting (Hülsheger & Schewe, 2011). People who engage in deep acting are less likely to be unhappy with their jobs because they do not experience emotional discord, which is the stress that occurs when outward emotions do not align with inner feelings (Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013). Deep acting helps build authentic relationships at work, makes people more engaged in their jobs, and increases their job satisfaction (Gabriel et al., 2023). Employees can give their jobs meaning and satisfaction by changing their mindset, balancing the destructive effects of workplace politics (Zhang & Bednall, 2016). As a result, deep acting is associated with greater happiness at work.

Overall, this mediation model suggests that employees who perceive a high level of politics at work may employ deep acting to maintain relationships and reduce stress. Deep acting helps employees cope with the undesired effects of workplace politics by fostering emotional honesty and job satisfaction. This aligns with research that found deep acting can help people handle challenging work situations (Lee & Chelladurai, 2018). Based on this reasoning, hypothesis 3 is developed.

Hypothesis 3: Deep acting significantly mediates the relationship between perceptions of organizational politics and job dissatisfaction, where perceptions of organizational politics are **positively** related to deep acting and deep acting is **negatively** related to job dissatisfaction.

2.7. Mediating Role of Naturally Felt Emotions

Emotional labor theories suggest that employees regulate their emotions to meet the demands of the workplace. However, not all methods of controlling emotions lead to stress or unhappiness. Unlike surface and deep acting, naturally felt emotions occur when employees experience and express feelings that align with the company's goals, without consciously trying to control them (Diefendorff et al., 2005). The idea behind this study is that feelings play a role in the link between job unhappiness and how people see organizational politics (POP). In particular, employees who feel that there is many politics at work may find it challenging to feel a sense of well-being, which can lead to dissatisfaction with their jobs and overall health.

People who perceive organizational politics (POP) believe the workplace is characterized by favoritism, self-serving behavior, and covert agendas (Ferris et al., 1989). Such places make people feel doubtful and suspicious, which makes it difficult for employees to experience genuine happiness (Rosen et al., 2009). When employees perceive politics as prevalent at work, they may feel controlled or ignored, which can hinder their ability to experience excitement, sincerity, or job-related pride (Chang et al., 2009). Instead, they might become emotionally distant or uninterested because political workplaces can cause people to feel stressed, suspicious, and fearful of losing their jobs (Vigoda-Gadot & Kapun, 2005). As a result, it is likely that POP and the feelings usually felt will have a negative connection.

People who naturally experience emotions at work are happier and more satisfied when their emotions align with their jobs, without outside interference (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). When employees are genuinely excited about their jobs, they feel less emotionally drained and are more engaged, which increases overall job satisfaction (Humphrey et al., 2015). On the other hand, when political pressures cause people to conceal their genuine feelings, they may feel detached, demotivated, and dissatisfied with their jobs (Liu et al., 2022). Gabriel et al. (2015) found that employees who can show their true feelings at work feel more empowered and connected to their jobs, which leads to lower job unhappiness. Naturally occurring feelings are naturally linked to happiness at work.

This mediation model suggests that employer company politics can hinder employees' sense of well-being at work. In turn, hiding feelings that naturally arise makes people less satisfied with their jobs. Studies have shown that emotionally honest Employees Are more involved and committed, but political work settings can make people less honest (Zhang & Bednall, 2016).

Perceptions of organizational politics (POP) significantly impact how employees perceive their jobs and their overall job satisfaction. When employees perceive their workplace as highly political, they often feel stressed, distrusted, and frustrated, which can make it more difficult for them to express their emotions. When favoritism, self-serving behaviors, and skewed decision-making prevail at work due to politics, it can be challenging for employees to feel positive about their jobs and coworkers. Instead of being naturally excited or involved, they may become emotionally detached or devise

ways to protect themselves from the political nature of the workplace. This hiding or distorting of emotions generally makes people less satisfied with their jobs.

Emotions that are naturally felt are those that arise spontaneously and align with a person's internal state, without external influence. Surface and deep acting require employees to conceal or manage their emotions to meet the company's needs. On the other hand, naturally felt emotions do not need any effort to be controlled (Liu et al., 2022). People are more likely to feel respected, mentally involved, and happy with their jobs when they work in a society that supports authenticity (Dailey & Kirk, 1992). However, if the workplace is highly political, employees may feel compelled to hide or modify their views to conform to the prevailing political climate. This mismatch between their feelings and the reality of their work situation can lead to emotional exhaustion and dissatisfaction (Zhang & Bednall, 2016).

It is essential to understand how naturally occurring feelings contribute to the connection between POP and job dissatisfaction if we aim to comprehend how workplace politics impact the health and well-being of workers. When employees feel that many politics are at play, they may find it harder to express their true feelings, which can lead to them being less satisfied with their jobs. Deep acting is when people try to match their honest feelings with what they need to say. On the other hand, quickly felt emotions can help people feel fulfilled and authentic at work (Zhang & Bednall, 2016).

Employees who can show their feelings easily are happier, more committed, and healthier at work. On the other hand, individuals who feel compelled to suppress their feelings due to political pressures may experience stress and disinterest at work. In highly political settings, people often conceal their genuine feelings, which erodes trust and confidence and ultimately leads to dissatisfaction (Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013). If employees think that decisions are being made unfairly or that they are being favored, they will likely feel removed from their work, which will make them angry and cynical toward the company. This lack of emotional honesty worsens job unhappiness and the harmful effects of office politics.

Given the importance of naturally occurring feelings as a buffer, businesses should strive to create a workplace that fosters honesty, fairness, and trust. To help employees feel more comfortable sharing their true feelings, leaders should foster open conversations, minimize bias, and promote ethical behavior. When employees can express their natural

emotions without worrying about others' opinions, they are more likely to feel emotionally connected to their work, which makes them happier with their jobs. On the other hand, hiding your natural feelings in a politically charged setting only exacerbates the situation, highlighting the importance of navigating corporate politics to enhance overall workplace well-being. Based on this reasoning, hypothesis 4 is developed.

Hypothesis 4: Naturally felt emotions significantly mediate the relationship between perceptions of organizational politics and job dissatisfaction, where perceptions of organizational politics are **negatively** related to naturally felt emotions, and naturally felt emotions are **negatively** related to job dissatisfaction.

The research model based on the hypotheses is presented in Figure 1.

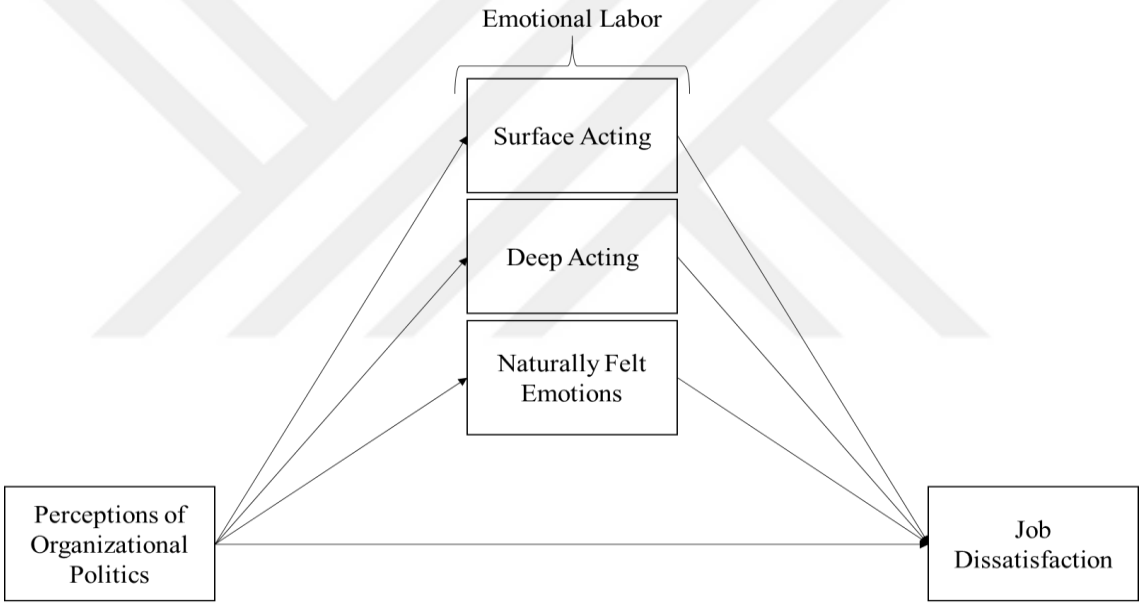


Figure 1. Research Model

3. METHOD

3.1. Research Design and Participants

This research utilized a cross-sectional design, where data were collected from participants at one point in time. Online questionnaires were distributed to 387 employees working across various industries in the Istanbul province of Türkiye. The sectors involved covered a wide range of fields, including both public and private organizations, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Companies' Sectors

Sector	**Frequency**	**Percent (%)**
Justice and Security	16	4.1
Woodworking, Paper, and Paper Products	2	0.5
Information Technologies	8	2.1
Glass, Cement, and Soil	3	0.8
Environment	4	1
Education	60	15.5
Electrical and Electronics	1	0.3
Energy	2	0.5
Finance	25	6.5
Food	9	2.3
Construction	12	3.1
Business and Management	6	1.6
Chemical, Petroleum, Rubber, and Plastic	3	0.8
Culture, Art, and Design	10	2.6
Mining	1	0.3
Machinery	6	1.6
Media, Communication, and Publishing	6	1.6
Automotive	6	1.6
Health and Social Services	61	15.8
Sports and Recreation	6	1.6
Agriculture, Hunting, and Fishing	1	0.3
Textiles, Apparel, Leather	79	20.4
Commerce (Sales and Marketing)	33	8.5
Social and Personal Services	10	2.6
Tourism, Accommodation, Food and Beverage Services	10	2.6
Transportation, Logistics, and Communication	7	1.8
Total	**387**	**100**

Of the participants, 291 (75.2%) were females, 96 (24.8%) were males, 229 (59.2%) were single, 132 (34.1%) were married, 15 (3.9%) were divorced, and 11 (2.8%) did not report

their marital status, 41 (10.6%) had a high school degree, 76 (19.6%) had an associate degree, 190 (49.1%) had a bachelor's degree, 68 (17.6%) had a master's degree, 12 (3.1%) had a doctorate, 100 (25.8%) were between 18-24 years old, 174 (45%) were between 25-34 years old, 79 (20.4%) were between 35-44 years old, 32 (8.3%) were between 45-54 years old, 2 (0.5%) were between 55-64 years old, 291 (75.2%) had a regular (i.e., permanent) job, 96 (24.8%) had an irregular (i.e., temporary) job, 88 (22.7%) had work experience less than a year, 130 (33.6%) had work experience between 1-5 years, 87 (22.5%) had work experience between 5-10 years, and 82 (21.2%) had work experience more than 11 years.

3.2 Data Collection Instruments

The questionnaire form is presented in Appendix 1.

3.2.1. Perceptions of Organizational Politics Scale

Hochwarter et al.'s (2003) six-item and unidimensional scale was used to measure participants' perceptions of organizational politics. Akdoğan and Demirtaş (2014) adapted the scale to the Turkish context. Items were scored from 1: Completely disagree to 7: Completely agree.

3.2.2. Job Dissatisfaction Scale

Smith et al.'s (1985) four-item and unidimensional scale was used to measure participants' job dissatisfaction. Gürbüz et al. (2010) adapted the scale to the Turkish context. Items were scored from 1: Completely disagree to 7: Completely agree.

3.2.3. Emotional Labor Scale

Diefendorff et al.'s (2005) thirteen-item and three-dimensional scale was used to measure participants' emotional labor. Basım and Beğenirbaş (2012) adapted the scale to the Turkish context. Items were scored from 1: Never to 7: Always. The first six items on the scale measured the surface acting, the following four measured the deep acting, and the remaining three measured the naturally felt emotions.

3.2.4. Reliability and Validity Tests

Cronbach α coefficients were calculated to test the scales' internal consistency (i.e., reliability). Scores are presented in Table 4. A measurement model analysis was performed to test the validity of the scales. Accordingly, a factor analysis was done on the items of the scales. Results are shown in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2. Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	7,095	30,847	30,847	7,095	30,847	30,847	4,543	19,752	19,752
2	3,989	17,344	48,191	3,989	17,344	48,191	4,292	18,661	38,413
3	2,96	12,872	61,063	2,96	12,872	61,063	3,13	13,61	52,023
4	2,093	9,099	70,161	2,093	9,099	70,161	2,913	12,664	64,688
5	1,233	5,36	75,521	1,233	5,36	75,521	2,492	10,834	75,521
6	0,609	2,646	78,168						
7	0,488	2,124	80,291						
8	0,447	1,944	82,235						
9	0,415	1,806	84,041						
10	0,388	1,688	85,73						
11	0,373	1,623	87,353						
12	0,349	1,519	88,872						
13	0,324	1,41	90,281						
14	0,319	1,387	91,668						
15	0,307	1,337	93,005						
16	0,267	1,159	94,164						
17	0,242	1,054	95,219						
18	0,217	0,944	96,162						
19	0,204	0,886	97,049						
20	0,196	0,853	97,901						
21	0,174	0,758	98,659						
22	0,163	0,71	99,369						
23	0,145	0,631	100						

The results presented in Table 2 group the items into five factors. These are the first five factors with eigenvalues greater than one. The data in Table 2 shows that these factors explain 75.52% of the variance. Table 3 shows how items are grouped. Upon examination, it is evident that items on each scale are appropriately grouped. This proves the validity of the scales.

Table 3. Rotated Component Matrix

Items	Components				
	1	2	3	4	5
sa2	0,854				
sa5	0,837				
sa1	0,819				
sa4	0,816				
sa6	0,814				
sa3	0,801				
op4		0,882			
op3		0,87			
op2		0,837			
op6		0,837			
op5		0,783			
op1		0,754			
da2			0,852		
da3			0,843		
da1			0,822		
da4			0,811		
jds3				0,838	
jds2				0,827	
jds4				0,806	
jds1				0,805	
nfe2					0,904
nfe1					0,881
nfe3					0,85

Note: sa: surface acting, da: deep acting, nfe: naturally felt emotions, jds: job dissatisfaction, op: perceptions of organizational politics

3.2.5. Data Collection Procedure

Before commencing data collection, ethics committee approval was obtained from the Istanbul Ticaret University Research Ethics Committee on December 30, 2024. The approval number is E-65836846-044-341665. The approval form is presented in Appendix 2. Following this, data collection began by contacting the managers responsible within the organization. Organizations were identified based on their willingness to participate and their relevance to the study's focus. Managers and HR representatives were contacted via email and formal meetings, where they were informed about the research objectives, confidentiality measures, and ethical considerations. Once approvals

were granted, organizations facilitated the recruitment of participants. Employees were invited to participate through email notifications and internal communication channels. To ensure a balanced representation across different departments and job roles, HR managers assisted in distributing invitations. Participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality, minimizing potential bias in responses. A structured online questionnaire was used to collect data, ensuring ease of access and consistency in responses. The data were gathered through online surveys, which were made available on platforms like Google Forms and SurveyMonkey, allowing participants to access and complete the questionnaires easily

. The survey link was shared via email, company portals, and employee groups, allowing participants to complete the questionnaire at their convenience. To maximize response rates, reminders were sent periodically.

4. FINDINGS

Hypotheses are tested through linear regression analysis. Nevertheless, before this, correlation coefficients between variables were calculated to determine whether relations existed in the expected directions. Table 4 shows correlation coefficients. According to the results, naturally felt emotions are only related to deep acting positively ($r = 0.31$, $p < 0.01$). However, it is not related to other variables, which is contrary to expectations. Another exception is the positive relationship between deep acting and job dissatisfaction ($r = 0.12$, $p < 0.05$), because it was expected to be negative. Besides, as expected, there are significant relationships between other variables, which provide a basis for hypothesis tests.

Table 4. Correlations and Descriptives

	α	***M***	***SD***	**OP**	**JDS**	**SA**	**DA**	**NFE**
OP	0.91	4.61	1.71	1				
JDS	0.87	3.27	1.76	0.32**	1			
SA	0.93	3.47	1.80	0.22**	0.39**	1		
DA	0.91	3.81	1.77	0.10*	0.12*	0.48**	1	
NFE	0.88	4.62	1.66	-0.02	-0.01	-0.06	0.31**	1

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, OP: Organizational Politics Perceptions, JDS: Job Dissatisfaction, SA: Surface Acting, DA: Deep Acting, NFE: Naturally Felt Emotions

Although correlation coefficients tell something about the existence and direction of the relationship between variables, they do not provide causality. For this reason, linear regression analysis was performed in the next stage through SPSS Hayes Process Macro V4.1, Model number 4. Since there is no significant relationship between naturally felt emotions, organizational politics perceptions, and job dissatisfaction, naturally felt emotions are excluded from the regression analysis. Tables 5 and 6 show the regression analysis results.

Table 5. Regression Analysis Results

	SA			**DA**			**JDS**		
	β	**F**	**R^2**	**β**	**F**	**R^2**	**β**	**F**	**R^2**
OP	0.24***	21.08***	0.05	0.10*	4.20*	0.01	0.25***		
SA							0.36***	35.14***	0.21
DA							-0.08		

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, OP: Organizational Politics Perceptions, SA: Surface Acting, DA: Deep Acting, JDS: Job Dissatisfaction

Results in Table 5 indicate that perceptions of organizational politics significantly and positively impact job dissatisfaction (β=0.25, p<0.001). Therefore, Hypothesis 1 is supported. In addition, perceptions of organizational politics impact surface acting positively (β=0.24, p<0.001). At the same time, surface acting positively impacts job dissatisfaction (β=0.36, p<0.001), indicating a mediating role of surface acting between perceptions of organizational politics and job dissatisfaction. However, although perceptions of organizational politics impact deep acting positively (β=0.10, p<0.05), deep acting does not impact job dissatisfaction significantly (β=-0.08, p>0.05). Therefore, deep acting does not mediate between perceptions of organizational politics and job dissatisfaction. Because naturally felt emotions do not have significant relationships with perceptions of organizational politics and job dissatisfaction, it is not possible to talk about the naturally felt emotions' mediating role between perceptions of organizational politics and job dissatisfaction. Direct, indirect, and total effect sizes of perceptions of organizational politics on job dissatisfaction, presented in Table 6, give information about the significance of mediation.

Table 6. Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects

Effects	Path	B	LLCI	ULCI
Direct Effect	OP->JDS	0.2548	0.1606	0.3489
Indirect Effect	OP->SA->JDS	0.0878	0.0415	0.1440
	OP->DA->JDS	-0.0086	-0.0272	0.0039
Total Effect	OP->SA->JDS OP->DA->JDS	0.3339	0.2362	0.4316

OP: Perceptions of Organizational Politics, JDS: Job Dissatisfaction, SA: Surface Acting, DA: Deep Acting, LLCI: Lower-Level Confidence Interval, ULCI: Upper-Level Confidence Interval

Considering the results in Table 6, an indirect score must be significant to indicate a *full mediation*. When indirect and direct effect scores are significant simultaneously, this indicates a *partial mediation*. Lower-level confidence interval (LLCI) and upper-level confidence interval (ULCI) scores help interpret the significance of the relationships. When there is "0" between LLCI and ULCI, it indicates an insignificant effect. However, in the opposite case, it indicates a significant effect (Hayes, 2022). Here, on the OP->JDS path, there is no "0" between LLCI and ULCI; therefore, the direct effect of OP on JDS is significant. Additionally, on the OP->SA->JDS path, there is no "0" between LLCI and ULCI. Therefore, the indirect effect of OP on JDS through SA is significant. Because perceptions of organizational politics affect surface acting and job dissatisfaction

positively and simultaneously, surface acting impacts job dissatisfaction positively, there is a partial mediating role of surface acting in the relationship between perceptions of organizational politics and job dissatisfaction. Accordingly, hypothesis 2 is supported. Because the OP->DA->JDS path is not significant, deep acting does not mediate the relationship between perceptions of organizational politics and job dissatisfaction. Accordingly, hypothesis 3 is not supported. Because naturally felt emotion is not significantly related to perceptions of organizational politics and job dissatisfaction, there is no mediating role in the relationship between perceptions of organizational politics and job dissatisfaction. Accordingly, hypothesis 4 is not supported either. Table 7 shows which hypotheses are supported and which are not supported together.

Table 7. Hypotheses Test Results

Hypothesis Number	Hypothesis	Supported/Not Supported
1	There is a positive relationship between employees' perceptions of organizational politics and job dissatisfaction.	Supported
2	Surface acting significantly mediates the relationship between perceptions of organizational politics and job dissatisfaction, where perceptions of organizational politics are positively related to surface acting and surface acting is positively related to job dissatisfaction.	Supported
3	Deep acting significantly mediates the relationship between perceptions of organizational politics and job dissatisfaction, where perceptions of organizational politics are positively related to deep acting and deep acting is negatively related to job dissatisfaction.	Not supported
4	Naturally felt emotions significantly mediate the relationship between perceptions of organizational politics and job dissatisfaction, where perceptions of organizational politics are negatively related to naturally felt emotions, and naturally felt emotions are negatively related to job dissatisfaction.	Not supported

5. DISCUSSION

This study builds on earlier research investigating the adverse effects of organizational politics on job dissatisfaction while introducing emotional labor as a mediator. Prior studies (Ferris et al., 2002; Vigoda, 2000) established that perceptions of organizational politics (POP) strongly correlate with employee stress, reduced job satisfaction, and increased turnover intentions. Our findings confirm this relationship, as POP was positively linked to job dissatisfaction.

A key distinction in this study is the examination of emotional labor's mediating role. While previous research (Grandey & Gabriel, 2015; Hochschild, 1983) emphasized the psychological burden of emotional labor, our study provides an empirical demonstration of how different emotional labor strategies—surface acting, deep acting, and naturally felt emotions—modify the effect of POP on job dissatisfaction. Specifically, we found that surface acting significantly mediated the relationship, intensifying job dissatisfaction, whereas deep acting and naturally felt emotions did not mediate the relationship as expected. This contrasts with earlier studies suggesting deep acting could buffer against workplace stress (Humphrey et al., 2015). The lack of mediation for deep-seated emotions and naturally felt emotions suggests that, in politically charged environments, emotional regulation may not always mitigate dissatisfaction, indicating a complex dynamic between workplace politics and emotional adaptation.

5.1. Practical Implications

For business professionals and HR practitioners, these findings highlight the importance of managing organizational politics to reduce employee dissatisfaction. Organizations should:

- Minimize political behaviors by fostering transparent decision-making and merit-based rewards. Employees perceive fairness when promotions and recognition are based on competence rather than political influence.
- Train employees in emotional regulation techniques that reduce reliance on surface acting, which leads to emotional exhaustion and dissatisfaction.
- Enhance workplace trust and communication, encouraging naturally felt emotions to create a more authentic and psychologically safe work culture.

- Recognize the psychological costs of emotional labor and provide support mechanisms, such as employee wellness programs, to help employees manage stress.

5.2. Limitations

While this research brings valuable insights, there are a few limitations worth noting:

- **Cross-sectional design**: The study was based on data collected at a single point in time, which limits our ability to draw conclusions about cause and effect. Conducting a longitudinal study would allow for a deeper understanding of how **organizational politics** and emotional labor change over time.
- **Industry-specific differences**: Although the study included organizations from 27 industries, each industry may experience organizational politics differently. Future research could look at specific industries to provide more detailed and tailored findings.
- **Cultural context**: Since the study was conducted in Türkiye, the findings might not apply universally across different cultures. Research in various cultural settings, particularly comparing Eastern and Western countries, could offer a broader perspective on workplace politics.
- **Measuring emotional labor**: While well-established scales were used to assess emotional labor, capturing naturally felt emotions remains complex. Future studies could refine these tools to better measure emotional authenticity at work.

5.3. Recommendations for Future Research

Given the limitations of this study, there are several directions for future research:

- **Longitudinal studies**: It would be useful to follow participants over a longer period to explore how the relationship between perceptions of organizational

politics and emotional labor evolves. This could also help assess the long-term effectiveness of interventions.

- **Industry-focused research**: Future studies could explore how politics and emotional labor manifest in different industries like healthcare, finance, and manufacturing. This could lead to more specific recommendations tailored to each sector.
- **Cultural variations**: Since this study was conducted in Türkiye, future research should look at how organizational politics and emotional labor play out in different cultural settings. Studies comparing Eastern and Western workplaces could provide valuable insights into cultural influences on employee experiences.
- **Other emotional labor strategies**: It would be interesting to explore other emotional labor strategies, like emotion regulation training, to see if employees can develop ways to protect themselves from the negative effects of organizational politics. This could offer practical solutions for reducing job dissatisfaction.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1.

Anket Formu

Değerli Katılımcı,

Bu çalışma, Doç. Dr. Ufuk BAŞAR danışmanlığında İstanbul Ticaret Üniversitesi, Lisansüstü Eğitim Enstitüsü, İşletme (İngilizce) Yüksek Lisans programı öğrencisi İlknur ÜNER tarafından yürütülen Örgütsel Politika Algısı ve İş Tatminsizliği Arasındaki İlişkide Duygusal Emeğin Aracı Rolü başlıklı bir tez çalışmasıdır. Çalışmanın amacı, çalışanların örgütsel politika algısı, iş tatminsizliği ve duygusal emeği arasındaki ilişkinin incelenmesidir. Bu çalışma 18 yaş ve üzeri katılımcıları kapsamaktadır.

Araştırmaya katılımınız tamamen gönüllülük esasına dayanmaktadır. Araştırma sırasında sizden alınan bilgiler grup halinde değerlendirileceğinden, sizden kimlik belirleyici bilgiler istenmeyecektir. Cevaplarınız gizli tutulacak ve sadece araştırmacı tarafından bilimsel çalışmalarda kullanılacaktır. Bu anlamda, araştırma sonuçlarından sağlıklı bilgiler edinilebilmesi için soruların samimi bir şekilde doldurulması ve soruların boş bırakılmaması oldukça önemlidir. Bu çalışma genel olarak kişisel rahatsızlık teşkil edecek soruları içermemektedir. Ancak araştırma sırasında herhangi bir nedenden dolayı rahatsızlık hissederseniz, katılımınızı sonlandırabilirsiniz. Çalışma sırasında sizden istenilen, çalışmada yer alan maddeleri ve/veya soruları boş bırakmamaya özen göstererek samimi bir şekilde doldurmanızdır. Çalışmaya katılım yaklaşık 6 dakika sürecektir. Çalışma hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak için (Adı-Soyadı) İlknur ÜNER'e (E posta: ulaşabilirsiniz. Katılımınız için şimdiden teşekkür ederiz.

Bu çalışmaya tamamen gönüllü olarak katılıyorum ve istediğim zaman katılımımı sonlandırabileceğimi biliyorum. Verdiğim bilgilerin bilimsel amaçlı kullanımını kabul ediyorum.

Evet ( ) Hayır ( )

Lütfen aşağıdaki sorular için size uygun olan cevapları işaretleyiniz.

Cinsiyetiniz: Erkek ( ) Kadın ( )

Medeni haliniz: Evli ( ) Bekar ( ) Boşanmış ( )

Eğitim düzeyiniz: lise ( ) Yüksek okul ( ) Lisans ( ) Yüksek lisans ( ) Doktora ( )

Yaşınız: 18-24 arası ( ) 25-34 arası ( ) 35-44 arası ( ) 45-54 arası ( ) 55-64 arası ( )

Çalışma şekliniz: Tam zamanlı ( ) Yarı zamanlı ( )

APPENDIX 2.

İş tecrübeniz: Bir yıldan az ( ) 1-5 yıl arası ( ) 5-10 yıl arası ( ) 11 yıl ve fazlası ( )

Hangi sektörde çalışıyorsunuz (Yazınız):

Örgütsel Politika Algısı Ölçeği

Lütfen aşağıdaki ifadeleri okuyunuz ve size en uygun cevap seçeneğini daire içine alınız.

1: Kesinlikle katılmıyorum, 2: Katılmıyorum, 3: Pek katılmıyorum, 4: Kararsızım, 5: Biraz katılıyorum, 6: Katılıyorum, 7: Kesinlikle katılıyorum

Nu	Maddeler	Cevap						
1	İşyerinde bireysel çıkarlara hizmet eden davranışlar çok fazladır.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	Çalışanlar, işyeri çıkarlarından daha çok kendi çıkarlarını düşünürler.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	Çalışanlar, kendilerine yardımı dokunacak kişilere yaranmak için çok fazla zaman harcarlar.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	Çalışanlar, çıkar pastasından kendi paylarını almak için arka planda işler çevirirler.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	Çalışanlar, işyerinde var olan gruplara girme yönünde eğilim gösterirler.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	Çalışanlar başkalarından daha iyi görünmek uğruna birbirlerinin açıklarını ortaya çıkarırlar.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Duygusal Emek Ölçeği

Lütfen aşağıdaki ifadeleri okuyunuz ve size en uygun cevap seçeneğini daire içine alınız.

1: Hiçbir zaman, 2: Çok nadiren 3: Nadiren, 4: Bazen, 5: Sık sık, 6: Çoğu zaman, 7: Her zaman

Nu.	Maddeler	Cevap						
1	Müşterilerle uygun şekilde ilgilenebilmek için rol yaparım.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	Müşterilerle ilgilenirken iyi hissediyormuşum rolü yaparım.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	Müşterilerle ilgilenirken bir şov yapar gibi ekstra performans sergilerim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	Mesleğimi yaparken hissetmediğim duyguları hissediyormuşum gibi davranırım	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	Mesleğimin gerektirdiği duyguları sergileyebilmek için sanki bir maske takarım.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	Müşterilerime gerçek hissettiğim duygulardan farklı duygular sergilerim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	Müşterilere göstermek zorunda olduğum duyguları gerçekten yaşamaya çalışırım.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	Göstermem gereken duyguları gerçekte de hissetmek için çaba harcarım.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	Müşterilere göstermem gereken duyguları hissedebilmek için elimden geleni yaparım.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

10	Müşterilere sergilemem gereken duyguları içimde de hissedebilmek için yoğun çaba gösteririm.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	Müşterilere sergilediğim duygular samimidir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12	Müşterilere gösterdiğim duygular kendiliğinden ortaya çıkar.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13	Müşterilere gösterdiğim duygular o an hissettiklerime aynıdır.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

İş Tatminsizliği Ölçeği

Lütfen aşağıdaki ifadeleri okuyunuz ve size en uygun cevap seçeneğini daire içine alınız.

1: Kesinlikle katılmıyorum, 2: Katılmıyorum, 3: Pek katılmıyorum, 4: Kararsızım, 5: Biraz katılıyorum, 6: Katılıyorum, 7: Kesinlikle katılıyorum

1	İşimin beni tatmin etmediğini söyleyebilirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	İşimde mutsuz olduğumu düşünüyorum.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	Yaptığım işi eğlenceli bulmuyorum.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	Genellikle işimi şevksiz ve isteksiz bir şekilde yapıyorum.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Katılımınız için teşekkür ederim.

APPENDIX 3.

Tarih:30/12/2024 16:27
Sayı: E-65836846-044-341665
REKTÖRLÜK

341665

İSTANBUL TİCARET ÜNİVERSİTESİ

T.C.
İSTANBUL TİCARET ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜ

Sayı : E-65836846-044-341665 30.12.2024
Konu : Etik Onayı

Sayın İlknur ÜNER

İlgi : 23.12.2024 tarihli dilekçeniz.

İlgi yazınız ile "The Mediating Role of Emotional Labor in The Relationship between Perceptions of Organizational Politics and Job Dissatisfaction" isimli çalışmanın anket sorularına Etik Kurul onayı talep edilmektedir.

Adı geçen ve ekte yer alan anket soruları, Üniversitemiz Etik Kurulunca incelenerek etik tanım, değer ve ilkelere aykırı bir düzenleme tespit edilmediği, önerilen anket sorularının etik kurallara uygun olduğu ve etik onayının verildiği ifade edilmiştir.

Konuya ilişkin bilgilerinizi rica ederim.

Prof. Dr. Hanifi PARLAR
Rektör a.
Rektör Yardımcısı

Ek: Etik Onaylı Anket Soruları

Bu belge güvenli elektronik imza ile imzalanmıştır.

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