To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by William A. Schoel, III entitled "Accomplishing Work-Related Objectives and Obtaining Personal Benefits: An Examination of Antecedents of and Employee Reactions to Two Different Aspects of Political Behavior in Organizations". I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Industrial and Organizational Psychology.

Michael C. Rush, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation
and recommend its acceptance:

Accepted for the Council:

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ACCOMPLISHING WORK-RELATED OBJECTIVES AND OBTAINING PERSONAL BENEFITS: AN EXAMINATION OF ANTECEDENTS OF AND EMPLOYEE REACTIONS TO TWO DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF POLITICAL BEHAVIOR IN ORGANIZATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Based on the notion that political activity in organizations can be effectively differentiated in terms of whether it is aimed at accomplishing work-related objectives or obtaining strictly personal benefits, the purposes of this study were to examine select situational and dispositional antecedents of political behavior in organizations, to develop a better understanding of why the experience of workplace politics is dissatisfying to employees, and to investigate whether these antecedents and outcomes might differ depending on the type of political behavior in question. Participants in the study were 323 state government managers who provided information via survey regarding these two facets of political climate in their organizations as well as their attitudes regarding and their use of political influence tactics to accomplish work-related objectives and to obtain personal benefits. In addition, subjects completed measures of job satisfaction and procedural justice in their organizations and indicated the extent to which resource scarcity, limited authority and a lack of common goals characterized their organizations. A model comprising the hypothesized relationships among these variables was tested using structural equations analyses and multiple regression techniques. The results were supportive of most of the hypotheses that were considered, indicating that subjects were more likely perceive procedural injustice in their organizations and, in turn, be less satisfied with

their jobs to the extent that political activity aimed at obtaining strictly personal benefits was prevalent in their organizations. Moreover, these effects were stronger among subjects whose attitudes reflected a lack of Receptivity to the use of political tactics, a lack of Efficacy regarding their ability to understand and use political tactics, and a belief that politics is not an organizational Inevitability. By contrast, the political climate surrounding attempts to accomplish work-related objectives was not uniquely related to either procedural justice or job satisfaction. Both of these climates, however, were related to subjects' reported use of political tactics, as were subjects' attitudes about politics and organizational conditions reflecting a Lack of Common Goals and Limited Authority among employees. Resource Scarcity was not uniquely related to the use of tactics for work-related or personal benefits-oriented objectives.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	INTRODUCTION	1
II.	REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	13
	Defining Organizational Politics	13
	Conditions Which Foster Political Behavior	20
	Consequences of Organizational Politics	30
	The Present Study	45
	Hypotheses	48
	Summary	66
III.	METHOD	71
	Sample and Procedure	71
	Measures	72
	Analyses	86
IV.	RESULTS	88
	Evaluation of Measures	88
	Tests of Hypotheses	96
	Supplemental Analyses	130
	Summary of Findings	136
V.	DISCUSSION	144
	Effects of Political Climates	145
	Moderating Effects of Attitudes	149
	Attitudes as Predictors of Tactic Usage	151
	Situational Antecedents of Tactic Usage	152
	Contributions	157

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
V.	DISCUSSION (continued)	
	Limitations	158
	Future Research	164
	Concluding Remarks	171
	REFERENCES	172
	APPENDIX	182
	Pilot Study Results	183
	Statistical Power Analysis	196
	VITA	198

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE		PAGE
4.1	Factor Analysis of Core Model	90
4.2	Factor Analysis of Attitude Measures	92
4.3	Factor Analysis of Tactic Measures	94
4.4	Means, Standard Deviations, Alphas, and Intercorrelations Among Study Variables	102
4.5	Tests for Procedural Justice as a Mediator	107
4.6	Tests of Work-Related Politics Attitudes as Moderators	111
4.7	Tests of Personal Benefits Politics Attitudes as Moderators	112
4.8	T-Values and (Standard Errors) for the Hypothesized Structural Model	121
4.9	Fit Indices for Proposed and Revised Structural Models	126
4.10	T-Values and (Standard Errors) for the Revised Structural Model	128
4.11	Intercorrelations Among Tactics and Other Study Variables	132
4.12	Regression Results for Predictors of Each Particular Tactic	134
4.13	Summary of Support for Hypotheses	137

LIST OF TABLES

(continued - Appendix)

TABLE		PAGE
A.1	Rotated Factor Loadings For Items Comprising Measures of Resource Scarcity, Lack of a Common Goal, Limited Authority, Political Climate Perceptions (Work-Related and Personal), Procedural Justice and Job Satisfaction	185
A.2	Rotated Factor Loadings for Items Comprising Measures Pertaining to Individual Beliefs and Attitudes Regarding the Use of Politics to Accomplish Work-Related Objectives	188
A.3	Rotated Factor Loadings for Items Comprising Measures Pertaining to Individual Beliefs and Attitudes Regarding the Use of Politics to Obtain Personal Benefits	189
A.4	Factor Loadings for Items Assessing Individuals' Use of Political Methods to Accomplish Work-Related Objectives and to Obtain Personal Benefits	192
A.5	Means, Standard Deviations, Alphas, and Intercorrelations of Variables Considered in the Pilot Study	194

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE		PAGE
2.1	Definitions of Organizational Politics	19
2.2	Conditions Which Foster Political Behavior in Organizations	22
2.3	Potential Employee Reactions to Organizational Politics	34
2.4	Perceptions of Organizational Politics Scale (POPS)	41
2.5	Model of Antecedents and Outcomes of Organizational Politics	46
2.6	Summary of Hypotheses	68
3.1	Measure of Antecedents to Organizational Politics	73
3.2	Measure of Political Climate Perceptions	75
3.3	Measure of Individual Use of Politics to Accomplish Work-Related Objectives	77
3.4	Measure of Individual Use of Politics to Obtain Personal Benefits	78
3.5	Measure of Individual Attitudes About the Use of Politics to Accomplish Work-Related Objective	81
3.6	Measure of Individual Attitudes About the Use of Politics to Obtain Personal Benefits	83
4.1	Notational Summary of Hypotheses	97

LIST OF FIGURES

(continued)

FIGURE		PAGE
4.2	Complete Framework of Hypothesized Direct and Indirect Effects . .	100
4.3	Zero-Order Correlations Among Study Variables	104
4.4	Receptivity Toward Personal Benefits-Oriented Politics as a Moderator of the Effect of Political Climate Perceptions on Job Satisfaction	113
4.5	Efficacy Regarding Personal Benefits-Oriented Politics as a Moderator of the Effect of Political Climate Perceptions on Job Satisfaction	114
4.6	Receptivity Toward Personal Benefits-Oriented Politics as a Moderator of the Effect of Political Climate Perceptions on Procedural Justice	115
4.7	Perceived Inevitability of Personal Benefits-Oriented Politics as a Moderator of the Effect of Political Climate Perceptions on Procedural Justice	116
4.8	Standardized Path Coefficients for the Hypothesized Structural Model	120
4.9	Standardized Path Coefficients for the Revised Structural Model	127

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Though some may choose to ignore it, and others may wish to conceal it because it conflicts with traditional views of how organizations are supposed to operate, few can deny the reality of organizational politics. As some have stated, "Politics in organizations is simply a fact of life" (Ferris, Russ, & Fandt, 1989). Supporting this argument, a study of managers employed in a variety of different settings revealed that over 93 percent agreed that politics is common to most organizations (Gandz & Murray, 1980). In a similar study, 60 percent of the participating managers indicated that politics was a frequently encountered aspect of the organizational experience (Madison, Allen, Porter, Renwick & Mayes, 1980). Moreover, these managers reported political activity to occur in many functional areas of their organizations (e.g., accounting, marketing, sales) and to influence a wide variety of organizational processes such as interdepartmental coordination, promotions and transfers, resource allocation, delegation of authority, personnel policies, and work appraisals. Further evidence of the pervasiveness of politics in organizations derives from an observational study of managers employed at various levels in many different types of organizations which revealed that while "real" managers, on average, spent 32 percent of their time focusing on traditional management activities such as

planning, controlling, and decision-making, they devoted an additional 19 percent of their time to engaging in political and networking activities (Luthans, Hodgetts & Rosenkrantz, 1988). These studies suggest that not only is politics an organizational reality, but it is a reality with which managers are confronted on a regular basis.

In addition, the results of these studies offer partial support for contemporary perspectives on organizational politics which contend that, beyond a reality, political behavior is an organizational inevitability. According to these perspectives, political activity is an unavoidable consequence of multiple actors pursuing multiple, often conflicting, goals in a system where limited resources are available (cf., Cyert & March, 1963; Mintzberg, 1983; Pfeffer, 1981, 1992). Further, it has been argued that "it is probably effective ... that managers do behave as politicians [and] it is even better that some of them are quite good at it" (Pfeffer, 1981, p. 370) because the proficient use of one's political influence not only fosters effective decision-making (Gabarro, 1979) and decision implementation (Pfeffer, 1992) but also contributes to organizational innovation (Kanter, 1979) and enables managers to acquire the resources they need to accomplish their work-related objectives (Pfeffer, 1992). While assertions of the inevitability and potential effectiveness of political activity in organizations have not been

empirically tested, such perspectives, in light of the apparent prevalence of organizational politics, suggest that whether or not they choose to engage in political behavior themselves, managers must be capable of understanding and effectively dealing with the inherently political nature of organizations.

Despite its apparent prevalence and potential consequences for both individuals and organizations, systematic research aimed at developing a more informed understanding of this unique form of organizational behavior has been limited. The few empirical studies that have examined organizational politics tend to score consistent findings - an inverse relationship between employees' perceptions of organizational politics and reported levels of job satisfaction. Early research by Gandz and Murray (1980) and several more recent studies by Ferris and colleagues (Ferris & Kacmar, 1992; Ferris, Brand, Brand, Rowland, Gilmore, King, Kacmar & Burton, 1993; Ferris, Frink Galang, Zhou, Kacmar & Howard, 1994) revealed significant correlations between politics and job satisfaction ranging from -.21 to -.59. These findings, though by no means conclusive regarding the unique or causal bearing of organizational politics on employee job satisfaction, provide a reasonable basis to suspect that political activity in organizations presents a significant source of dissatisfaction among employees.

Low levels of job satisfaction, while inherently undesirable from an employee standpoint, may also present a number of serious problems for organizations. For example, according to Roznowski and Hulin (1992), employees' adaptive responses to dissatisfaction might include efforts to reduce work role inclusion (e.g., turnover, absenteeism), reduce job inputs (e.g., social loafing), increase job outcomes (e.g., stealing), and/or attempts to change the work situation (e.g., unionization). Hence, as a potentially significant source of job dissatisfaction, political activity in organizations represents an important concern for employees, organizations and researchers alike. While other factors bearing on employee job satisfaction may be of equal or greater import, organizational politics poses a somewhat unique problem in that, unlike some antecedents of job dissatisfaction (e.g., aspects of the work itself) which can be substantially modified to alleviate dissatisfaction, political activity, though perhaps manageable to some extent, is presumed to be inevitable and thus impossible to fully eliminate from organizations. Given the unlikelihood of successfully removing this chronic source of employee dissatisfaction from the workplace, it would be helpful to gain a better understanding of <u>why</u> political activity in organizations is dissatisfying to employees. By so doing, it may be possible to identify ways to reduce the adverse consequences associated with organizational politics.

Accordingly, one objective of this investigation is to examine several factors which may govern employees' affective reactions to the experience of politics in the workplace. While a number of such factors have been discussed in the literature on organizational politics (e.g., control and understanding of one's environment; Ferris et al., 1989), few have been the subject of empirical study. The present investigation focuses on employees' beliefs and attitudes pertaining to organizational politics as potentially important variables bearing on one's interpretation of and reactions to politics in the organization. Specifically, it is hypothesized that individuals working in highly political climates will be less satisfied to the extent that they believe political activity to be inherently wrong, to have a detrimental impact on organizations, to be avoidable, and to be difficult for them to understand or use effectively. According to contemporary perspectives, such beliefs reflect a somewhat naive understanding of organizational politics and, hence would serve to exacerbate any adverse reactions employees may have when confronted with the reality of political behavior in the workplace.

As potential moderating variables, individual attitudes and beliefs concerning politics may help explain why the experience of workplace politics is more dissatisfying for some employees than for others, but they offer only partial

insight as to what it is about political behavior in organizations that gives rise to dissatisfaction among employees - that is, what mediates the relationship between politics and job satisfaction. Some models portray organizational politics as a source of stress or job anxiety (e.g., Ferris et al., 1989; Matteson & Ivancevich, 1987) which, in turn, may affect job satisfaction. Though empirical evidence of stress as a mediator is lacking, some studies have demonstrated a relationship between perceptions of politics and job stress (Ferris et al., 1993, 1994). Hence, it would appear that stress is one viable avenue by which politics may lead to employee dissatisfaction.

An equally viable mediator, however, that has been virtually ignored in the politics literature, is procedural justice or fairness. An integral aspect common to most definitions of organizational politics is that politics involves "informal" behavior - that is, employee behavior which is not based on established authority, procedures, job descriptions, rules, or that which is implied by such arrangements. As such, political behavior is, by definition, incongruent with the formally established procedures which govern employee behavior in organizations. One could therefore expect individuals working in very political climates to view their organizations as less procedurally just or fair than individuals working in less political climates and, consequently, to be less satisfied with their

jobs. Examining the validity of this premise is another objective of this investigation. Specifically, it is hypothesized that perceptions of fairness will partially mediate the relationship between organizational politics and employee job satisfaction. Moreover, it is hypothesized that employees beliefs and attitudes regarding politics, outlined above as moderators of the politics-satisfaction relationship, will also operate in a similar manner as moderators of the relationship between politics and perceptions of fairness, such that individuals working in highly political climates will perceive their organizations to be less fair to the extent that they believe political activity to be wrong, harmful, avoidable, and difficult to understand or use. The latter hypothesis is based on the premise that individuals who are less comfortable with or capable of handling political aspects of their organizations will be more inclined to focus on the fairness of such activities.

In addition to describing it as "informal" behavior, most definitions of organizational politics hold that it involves the intentional use of influence to achieve self-serving ends (cf., Drory & Romm, 1990). It has also been generally conceded that, although it is self-serving behavior, political activity, may be either congruent or incongruent with the goals of an organization (Mayes & Allen, 1977; Porter, Allen & Angle, 1981; Schein, 1977). For

example, a manager's use of political influence to get help in completing a project by a given deadline not only serves his or her personal interests but also serves the interests of his or her organization (congruent goals). By contrast, a manager's use of political tactics to obtain higher performance ratings serves his or her interests but does not serve the interests of his or her organization (incongruent goals). Hence, political activity in organizations can be broadly classified as either consistent or inconsistent with organizational goals. Indeed, studies of managerial influence activity have demonstrated that managers use their influence in pursuit of two basic types of goals: personal and organizational (e.g., Kipnis, Schmidt & Wilkinson, 1980).

Although the distinction between personal and organizational goals of influence has been recognized in the politics literature for some time, it has seldom been considered in empirical studies of organizational politics and has not been considered in studies pertaining to employee reactions to political contexts. However, it seems plausible that employees' reactions to the experience of workplace politics might differ depending on the type of politics that they experience. Employees might view political activity surrounding the pursuit of organizational goals to be somewhat more legitimate, and hence less dissatisfying, than the use of political methods to pursue

goals of a strictly personal nature because the former type of activity potentially serves the common good, while the latter does not. Another objective of this study is to examine this possibility in an effort to gain a better understanding of the extent to which these different classes of political behavior in organizations may be related to employee job dissatisfaction and, thus, to identify those areas in which efforts to manage political activity in organizations might be most productive. Specifically, it is hypothesized that political activity in organizations that is aimed at accomplishing strictly personal goals will be more strongly associated with perceptions of unfairness and dissatisfaction among employees than political activity that is aimed at accomplishing organizational goals.

Mentioned earlier, contemporary models of political behavior in organizations suggest that political activity is an inevitable consequence of many different individuals pursuing many different goals in a system where scarce resources and other constraints, such as limits to the formal authority of organizational members, pose obstacles to be overcome in order to accomplish these goals (cf. Cyert & March, 1963; Mintzberg, 1983; Pfeffer, 1981, 1992). Thus, one would expect to find more political activity, and hence lower levels of employee job satisfaction, in organizations where resources are scarce, employees have limited formal authority to pursue their objectives, and a sense of common

purpose or goals among employees is lacking. Though such antecedent conditions are fundamental to current models of organizational politics and would have implications as to how political activity in organizations might be reduced, they have seldom been the subject of empirical scrutiny. Another objective of this study, therefore, is to test this hypothesis. Specifically, it is hypothesized that employees will report greater amounts of political activity occurring in their organizations (i.e., perceive their organizations as having a more political climate) to the extent that resources are scarce, formal authority is limited, and a sense of common purpose among employees is lacking.

By the same token, these factors should be related not only to employee perceptions regarding the political climate of their organizations (i.e., how often <u>other</u> people engage in political behavior) but also to the frequency with which employees <u>themselves</u> engage in political activity. Moreover, to the extent that individuals learn from and behave in accordance with cues from their social environment, people employed in highly political climates could be expected to more frequently use political methods of influence than people working in climates of a less political nature. Hence, conditions such as resource scarcity, limited formal authority, and lack of a common goal should be related to the frequency with which employees report using political methods of influence both directly and indirectly, by virtue

of the impact of such factors on the political climate of an organization.

Another objective of this investigation is to examine the relative contribution of these contextual factors and beliefs and attitudes regarding politics to an individual's use of political methods of influence, thereby affording a better understanding of the antecedents of political behavior in organizations. It is difficult to formulate specific hypotheses regarding the relative contribution of contextual and dispositional factors to individuals' use of political tactics due to the limits of existing research. In general, however, it is hypothesized that an employee will more frequently engage in political behavior to accomplish his or her objectives to the extent that: a) resources are scarce, system constraints are severe, and a sense of common purpose or goals among employees is lacking in his or her organization, b) the climate of his or her organization is perceived to be highly political, and c) he or she does <u>not</u> believe political activity to be inherently wrong, to have a detrimental impact on organizations, and/or to be difficult for him or her to understand or use effectively.

In sum, the purpose of this study is to jointly examine several theoretically important antecedents and consequences of political behavior in organizations and how relationships among them may differ depending on whether the political behavior in question is consistent or inconsistent with

organizational goals. The results of this investigation should not only contribute to a better understanding of the contextual and dispositional factors which foster political activity in organizations but also offer insight regarding individual adaptation to political contexts. From a practical standpoint, the outcomes of this investigation should suggest a number of viable alternatives for the effective management of both political activity and its effects regarding the well-being of organizational members.

The following chapter reviews the literature and previous research on the topic of organizational politics, beginning with a discussion of the definition of organizational politics and the dimensionality of this construct. The framework for the present study is then presented and discussed against the backdrop of prior research and theory regarding the antecedents, outcomes, and other factors related to political behavior in organizations. The chapter concludes with a review of the hypotheses examined in this study and is followed by a chapter describing how they will be tested.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Research on organizational politics has generally focused on three related questions. The first question concerns the nature of the construct and how it should be defined. The second area of inquiry pertains to conditions which foster political behavior in organizations. The third question centers on the consequences of politics in the workplace. The literature regarding each of these three basic questions is reviewed below.

Defining Organizational Politics

Though interest in political behavior in organizations is by no means a recent development or a novel concern, systematic studies of the phenomenon have appeared only recently, and there remain considerable differences of opinion among researchers as to the appropriate definition of this unique form of organizational behavior. While it is not the intent of this paper to provide an exhaustive review of the many definitions of organizational politics that have been offered in the literature (for an extensive review, see Drory & Romm, 1990), a brief review of some of the more prominent definitions expressed in the literature will provide a basis for understanding the complexity of the construct and the definition that is used in the present investigation.

The concept of organizational politics is closely related to notions of power and social influence. In fact, politics is often equated with the use of influence, or social power in action. The definition of organizational politics offered by Pfeffer (1981, p. 7) captures this point of view:

> Organizational politics involved those activities taken within an organization to acquire, develop, and use power and other resources to obtain one's preferred outcomes in a situation in which there is uncertainty or dissensus about choices.

In considering this definition, it is important to note that no distinctions are made regarding the type of power that is used. Hence, according to this definition, the use of legitimate power (cf., French & Raven, 1959) or formal authority to obtain one's preferred outcomes would be considered political behavior. Some might consider this to be an overly broad definition of politics.

According to other definitions, however, the appropriate use of one's formal authority would not be considered political. For example, Mintzberg (1983, p. 172) is quite clear on this point in stating that:

> ...politics refers to individual or group behavior that is informal, ostensibly parochial, typically divisive, and above all, in the technical sense, illegitimate - sanctioned neither by formal

> authority, accepted ideology, nor certified expertise (though it may exploit any one of these).

Interestingly, both Pfeffer's and Mintzberg's definitions allude to the presence of conflict. However, Pfeffer focuses on politics as a response to conflict (i.e., dissensus), whereas Mintzberg's model places politics as a source of conflict. Both perspectives have merit and, viewed concurrently, suggest that politics and conflict are closely, and perhaps reciprocally related phenomena.

While few authors would disagree that politics and conflict are closely related, the presence of conflict is not mentioned in some definitions of organizational politics. For example, in one of the more succinct definitions of organizational politics that has been offered, Allen and colleagues (1979, p. 77) state:

> Organizational politics involve intentional acts of influence to enhance or protect the self-interest of individuals or groups.

While it does not mention conflict, this definition is generally consistent with most others in contending that both individuals and groups may engage in political behavior. This definition also includes aspects of organizational politics that are seldom made explicit in other definitions, namely that political behavior is both intentional and self-serving.

These two elements as well as many of the other elements outlined above are included in a fairly comprehensive definition of organizational politics offered by Porter, Allen, and Angle (1981, p. 111), who define political behavior as:

> Social influence attempts that are discretionary (i.e., that are outside the behavioral zones prescribed or prohibited by the formal organization), that are intended (designed) to promote or protect the self-interests of individuals and groups (units), and that threaten the self-interests of others (individuals, units).

The last part of this definition holds that unless the behavior in question threatens the self-interests of others, it cannot be considered political. This particular point is debatable for two reasons. It assumes that a political actor always has competition and implies that the political actor can be the only beneficiary of his or her behavior.

This latter point pertaining to the beneficiary of political behavior in organizations has been a topic of discussion in the organizational politics literature and has considerable bearing on how the construct is defined. As evidenced by the definitions outlined above, most authors agree with the view that, to be considered political, an individual's behavior must be intended to serve his or her interests. However, it has been argued that the actor need

not be the only beneficiary or the only intended beneficiary of his or her actions for his or her actions to be considered political. Mayes and Allen (1977) devote considerable attention to this particular issue in presenting their definition of organizational politics (p. 675):

> Organizational politics is the management of influence to obtain ends not sanctioned by the organization or to obtain sanctioned ends through non-sanctioned influence means.

This definition suggests that political behavior can in fact be directed toward goals of value to both the political actor and the organization. For example, consider the manager who gives gifts to his or her coworkers (i.e., non-sanctioned, informal, discretionary means) to obtain their assistance in completing a major project by a given deadline (i.e., sanctioned goal). Both the manager and the organization potentially benefit from such behavior (note also that this behavior presents no real threat to the self-interests of others). The essence of this perspective on organizational politics is best captured by Schein (1977), who notes (p. 66):

> The intent of the [political actor] can be classified into two general categories: (a) to bring about personal goals [that are] congruent with organizational goals and (b) to bring about

> personal goals [that are] incongruent with organizational goals.

Hence, this perspective on organizational politics suggests that individuals may engage in political behavior to obtain strictly personal benefits or to accomplish their work-related objectives (which would also personally benefit the political actor).

The definitions of organizational politics outlined above reflect the most prominent views that have been expressed in the literature and are presented in Figure 2.1 for comparison. Based on a consideration of each of these and other definitions that have been offered, as well as how these definitions correspond to other aspects of the literature on organizational politics, the following definition was used in the present study:

> Organizational politics refers to actions that are not officially authorized by an organization and are aimed at influencing others in order to accomplish work-related objectives or to obtain personal benefits.

This definition reflects the notions of influence, informality, and intent discussed above. It imposes no requirements regarding particular antecedents (e.g., uncertainty, competition, conflict) or outcomes (e.g., divisiveness, threats to the self-interests of others) associated with the behavior, but it does allow that such

Organizational politics involved those activities taken within an organization to acquire, develop, and use power and other resources to obtain one's preferred outcomes in a situation in which there is uncertainty or dissensus about choices. Pfeffer (1981, p. 7).

...politics refers to individual or group behavior that is informal, ostensibly parochial, typically divisive, and above all, in the technical sense, illegitimate - sanctioned neither by formal authority, accepted ideology, nor certified expertise (though it may exploit any one of these). Mintzberg (1983, p. 172).

Organizational politics involve intentional acts of influence to enhance or protect the self-interest of individuals or groups. Allen, Madison, Porter, Renwick, and Mayes (1979, p. 77).

Social influence attempts that are discretionary (i.e., that are outside the behavioral zones prescribed or prohibited by the formal organization), that are intended (designed) to promote or protect the self-interests of individuals and groups (units), and that threaten the self-interests of others (individuals, units). Porter, Allen, and Angle (1981, p. 111)

Organizational politics is the management of influence to obtain ends not sanctioned by the organization or to obtain sanctioned ends through non-sanctioned influence means. Mayes and Allen (1977, p. 675)

The intent of the [political actor] can be classified into two general categories: (a) to bring about personal goals [that are] congruent with organizational goals and (b) to bring about personal goals [that are] incongruent with organizational goals. Schein (1977, p. 66)

Organizational politics refers to actions that are not officially authorized by an organization and are aimed at influencing others in order to accomplish work-related objectives or to obtain personal benefits. Present study.

Figure 2.1

Definitions of Organizational Politics.

conditions may be associated with political activity. Though it is not explicitly stated in this definition, it is recognized that employees may either individually or collectively engage in political behavior. While this definition might not correspond to everyone's view of organizational politics, it is believed to be a faithful depiction of the construct that has been expressed in the literature.

Conditions Which Foster Political Behavior

Virtually all of the definitions of political behavior that have been expressed in the literature explicitly or implicitly maintain that it is intentional behavior. As such, the decision to engage in organizational politics ultimately rests with the employee. However, this decision may be influenced by a host of individual, situational, and/or organizational factors. Indeed, under headings such as "impression management", "ingratiation", and "upward influence", numerous studies have examined various individual and situational characteristics related to employees' use of political tactics (for a review of this literature, see Ferris & Judge, 1991). By contrast, relatively few studies have examined organizational factors associated with the occurrence political activity in the workplace. Hence, it remains unclear why some organizations might be more prone to political activity than others.

Though they have received only limited research attention, conditions which may ultimately give rise to political behavior in organizations have been a topic of considerable discussion in the literature (cf., Mintzberg, 1983; Pfeffer, 1981; Tushman, 1977). A common theme expressed in this area of the literature is that organizational members will be more inclined to engage in political behavior when faced with uncertainty or conflict. Thus, those aspects of an organization which promote higher levels of uncertainty or conflict would indirectly foster higher levels of political activity within the organization as employees attempt to reduce the uncertainty and/or resolve the conflict with which they are confronted. In his discussions of power and politics in organizations, Pfeffer (1981) devotes considerable attention to this issue and offers a useful framework for understanding the conditions which may foster political behavior in organizations. A model similar to Pfeffer's is presented in Figure 2.2 and briefly described below.

According to the model, four conditions may contribute to higher levels of conflict and, hence, higher levels of political activity within an organization. One condition is Interdependence among employees. To the extent that employees are dependent upon one another for the completion of their work or are otherwise affected by each other's actions, there is a greater basis for conflict among them.

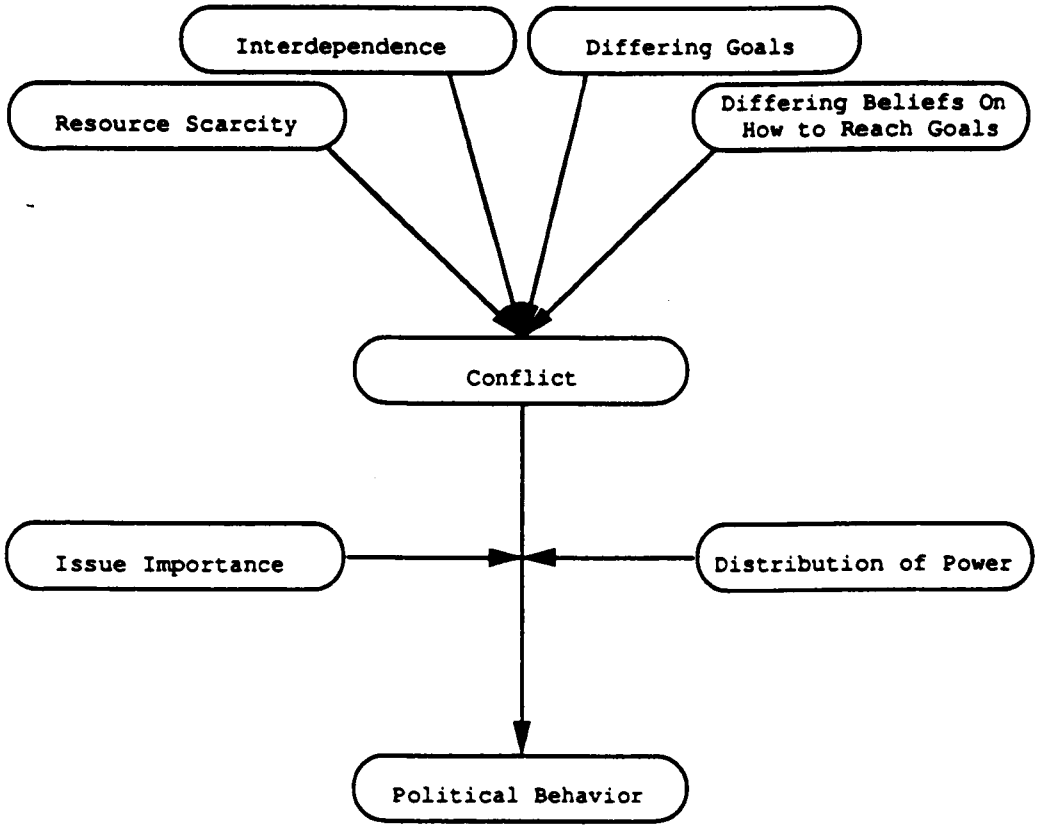


Figure 2.2

Conditions Which Foster Political Behavior in Organizations. (Adapted from Pfeffer, 1981, p.69)

Resource Scarcity is another condition which may lead to conflict in that an organization's lack of sufficient resources to satisfy everyone's needs requires that decisions be made regarding whose needs will and will not be met. As resource scarcity increases, conflict surrounding resource distribution is also likely to increase. The two remaining conditions which may lead to political behavior via conflict pertain to Differences in Goals and Beliefs Regarding Goal Accomplishment. To the extent that employees have either differing goals or differing beliefs regarding the best way to accomplish their common goals they are more likely to experience conflict. Thus, according to Pfeffer's model, one would expect to find a greater amount of political activity occurring in organizations where employees are highly interdependent, resources are scarce, and there is relative lack of consensus on goals and how they should be achieved.

In addition to outlining several organizational conditions which may affect the amount of political activity occurring in an organization by virtue of the conflict they engender, Pfeffer's model also includes two factors which may govern the effects of these conditions. Specifically, the model holds that the extent to which conflict leads to political behavior depends on both the Importance of the issue to the political actors involved and the Distribution of Power within the organization. An organizational actor

will be more inclined to engage in political behavior when the issue at hand is important to the actor and/or the actor has insufficient formal power or authority to resolve the issue in his or her favor. Whereas issue importance would vary depending upon the particular issue in dispute, the distribution of power within an organization would be relatively more stable over time and could thus be viewed as a fifth organizational condition that fosters political behavior. According to this perspective, one would expect to find more political activity occurring within organizations where formal authority is highly centralized and employees are generally less empowered to influence important aspects of their work.

The relationships depicted in Figure 2.2 suggest that there will be a greater occurrence of political activity, or a more political climate, within an organization when its employees are highly interdependent, resources are scarce, goal consensus is low, and authority is highly centralized. However, empirical evidence pertaining to the accuracy of these predictions remains somewhat limited due to the fact that only a few studies have examined organizational conditions which may promote political activity in the workplace. Though few in number, the studies which have considered this issue offer some insight regarding the factors listed above. One study, conducted by Welsh and Slusher (1986), examined several of these factors in

relation to the amount of political activity demonstrated by faculty members in the selection of new deans at 40 different colleges located in major state universities. Political activity was assessed using both interviews and faculty members' ratings of the frequency with which they had observed other faculty members use different political tactics to influence the selection process in each college. For each college, measures of department specialization, heterogeneity in faculty training, departmental interdependence, centralization of authority, and consensus on the attributes of an effective dean were also gathered. Results indicated that more political activity occurred under conditions of moderate, rather than low or high, interdependence. Moreover, under conditions of low to moderate interdependence, consensus among faculty was positively associated with political activity, but when there was high interdependence, the relationship between consensus and political activity was negative. Departmental specialization, heterogeneity, and centralization of authority were significantly related to consensus, but made no unique contribution to the variance in political activity. Although this study focused only on political activity surrounding a specific decision situation, the results suggest that both goal consensus and interdependence are associated with political behavior in organizations,

though the nature of these relationships may be somewhat more complex than previously thought.

Rather than focusing on specific decision situations, other studies have examined organizational conditions associated with the employees' general perceptions of politics in the workplace. Ferris and Kacmar (1989), in a survey of 95 nurses employed in the same hospital, examined employee perceptions of politics in relation to several individual, group and organizational factors, including work group cohesion, formalization of organizational processes, and supervisory span of control. The results indicated that lower levels work group cohesion were associated with higher levels of perceived politization. However, formalization and span of control made no unique contribution to employee perceptions of organizational politics when considered simultaneously with other variables included in the study (e.g., cohesion).

Ferris and colleagues (1994) conducted a similar study with a much larger sample of 822 individuals employed in nonacademic positions at a large university. Along with a number of additional variables, organizational factors pertaining to formalization of procedures and centralization of authority were assessed via a survey and examined in relation to perceptions of politics. The results of this study indicated that employees' perceptions of politics were stronger under conditions of greater centralization of

authority and less formalization of procedures. Moreover, the effects for these variables remained significant ($p<.001$) when considered simultaneously with seven additional personal factors (e.g., age, gender, job tenure).

Another study examining organizational characteristics in relation to employee perceptions of politics was conducted by Gandz and Murray (1980) through a survey of 428 recent graduates of a part-time MBA program. In this study, participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they believed that eleven different processes in their organizations (e.g., promotions and transfers, budget allocation, work appraisals) were influenced by political activity. These ratings were then averaged and compared to several other personal and organizational variables. Of the two organizational characteristics that were considered, neither the size of the organization nor the private vs. public nature of the organization was significantly related to perceived levels of political activity. Although this study and the two other studies focusing on perceptions of organizational politics considered only a few of the organizational conditions which have been suggested to promote political behavior, these studies offer support for some the relationships which have been proposed. The findings are consistent with the notion that highly centralized authority in organizations promotes higher levels of political activity. The results pertaining to

group cohesion and formalization might also support the proposed effects of goal dissensus on organizational politics in that group cohesion may, to some extent, reflect goal consensus among group members. Also, formalization of procedures in the form of written rules and guidelines would arguably leave less room for dissensus among employees regarding the proper way to execute job assignments.

In addition to the research examining employees' perceptions of political activity in organizations, a few studies have examined organizational characteristics in relation to employees' reported use of political tactics to influence their supervisors. In a study by Kipnis, Schmidt, and Wilkinson (1980), 225 managers enrolled part-time in a graduate business course were asked to indicate the frequency with which they used a variety of tactics to influence their boss. Results indicated that managers working in unionized organizations more often used "blocking" tactics (e.g., engaging in a work slowdown) to influence their boss than managers in non-unionized organizations. However, in a similar study of 113 managers, Schmidt and Kipnis (1984) did not find a significant relationship between unionization and managers' use of political tactics.

Another study, conducted by Cheng (1983), posited political climate in organizations as not a consequence of organizational conditions but as an organizational condition

itself which might foster additional political activity. In this study, 36 subjects employed in a social security agency were presented with one of two vignettes describing an organization. One vignette described a "rational" organization where office policies and regulations were perceived as fair by employees. The other vignette described a "political" organization characterized by favoritism and unfair policies and regulations. Subjects in each condition were then asked to indicate the likelihood that they would use each of six different tactics to influence their hypothetical supervisor to hire additional personnel due to a sudden increase in workload. Subjects in the "political" climate condition indicated that they would use political tactics (i.e., ingratiation, threats, and blocking) more often and non-political tactics (i.e., rational persuasion) less often than subjects in the "rational" climate condition. Although this study was based on hypotheticals and intentions, the results suggest that organizational politics may be a self-perpetuating phenomenon.

Clearly, more research is needed to identify the particular organizational attributes which foster political activity in the workplace. There have been few serious attempts to examine the propositions depicted in Figure 2.2. In fact, no attempt has been made to directly examine the proposed effect of resource scarcity on political behavior in organizations. However, as noted above, there is some,

albeit limited, evidence to support the proposed effects of goal dissensus and centralization of authority, and there is some evidence to suggest that moderate, as opposed to high or low, levels of interdependence among organizational units may promote political behavior. There is also some evidence to suggest that political activity breeds more political activity. Hence, while employees may initially engage in political behavior as a response to conflict over scarce resources, such behavior may persist even when ample resources become available. The need for additional research to clarify these issues is evident and of considerable importance in light of the potential consequences of political activity in the workplace.

Consequences of Organizational Politics

Political behavior in an organization may result in certain consequences not only for those employees who engage in political behavior but also for the organization as a whole. A substantial amount of research has focused on the consequences of engaging in political behavior from the political actor's perspective. This line of research has examined not only the general effectiveness of different political tactics (Falbe & Yukl, 1992; Mowday, 1978; Schilit & Locke, 1982; Yukl & Falbe, 1992; Yukl & Tracey, 1992) but also how political behavior may affect selection outcomes (Baron, 1989; Gilmore & Ferris, 1989), performance ratings (Ferris, Judge, Rowland, & Fitzgibbons, 1994; Kipnis &

Schmidt, 1988; Wayne & Ferris, 1990; Wayne & Kacmar, 1991), pay increases (Bartol & Martin, 1990; Kipnis & Schmidt, 1988), career success (Judge & Bretz, 1994), and job tension (Kipnis & Schmidt, 1988). By contrast, only a few studies have focused on the broader implications of political activity for organizations as a whole. Hence, the extent to which political activity has a net positive, negative, or negligible bearing on organizational effectiveness remains unclear.

Some authors have argued that it is probably effective for organizations that managers engage in political activity (c.f., Pfeffer, 1981, 1992). But, among employees, the opposing view of politics as detrimental to organizational effectiveness appears to be more common (Gandz & Murray, 1980). Unfortunately, a review of the politics literature reveals only one study in which the relationship between organizational politics and firm performance has been directly examined. Eisenhardt and Bourgeois (1988), in a study of top management teams from 8 organizations, used both interviews and questionnaires to assess the amount of political activity (i.e., alliance formation) occurring within each team. Both subjective (i.e., CEO ratings) and objective (i.e., sales growth and profitability figures) measures of firm performance were also gathered. A comparison of these data revealed that more political activity occurred within the top management teams of the

more poorly performing of these 8 organizations. Although this research was based on a small sample of organizations and focused on political activity in top management teams, rather than throughout the organizations, the results offer some support for the notion that political activity has a harmful impact on organizational performance.

Instead of focusing on the consequences of organizational politics for firm effectiveness per se, several studies have taken a less direct approach to this issue by examining employee reactions to politics in the workplace - reactions which may have significant implications for organizational effectiveness. In a review and integration of the various aspects of organizational politics addressed in the literature, Ferris, Russ, and Fandt (1989) discussed a number of ways in which employees might react to political environments. According to Ferris et al., when faced with a highly political organizational climate, employees may respond in one or more of several different ways. They may "join the political game" by engaging in political behavior themselves and becoming more involved with their job. They may attempt to avoid organizational politics through withdrawal, either from the organization (e.g., turnover, absenteeism) or into their own job realm (e.g., increased job involvement). Or, if unable to avoid politics, they may endure it, experiencing greater job anxiety and dissatisfaction. According to Ferris et al.,

these responses would be governed, to some extent, by whether or not employees understand the political dynamics of their organization and feel a sense of control over political aspects of their environment. Also, though it is not explicitly stated by Ferris et al., the extent to which employees possess favorable or unfavorable attitudes regarding organizational politics is strongly implied in their discussion as important factor governing reactions to the experience of workplace politics. The complete framework of relationships discussed by Ferris et al. (1989) is depicted in Figure 2.3. Though the relationships proposed in this model have not been examined concurrently, a number of studies pertaining to select portions of the model have been conducted.

Gandz and Murray (1980) conducted one of the first studies examining employee reactions to the experience of organizational politics. Via survey, the authors asked 428 recent graduates of a part-time MBA program to indicate the extent to which a number of different processes in their organizations (e.g., promotions and transfers, budget allocation, work appraisals) were influenced by political activity. These ratings were found to be significantly related to subjects' reported levels of general job satisfaction such that employees who perceived higher levels of political activity in their organizations were less satisfied with their jobs. Moreover, the effect for politics

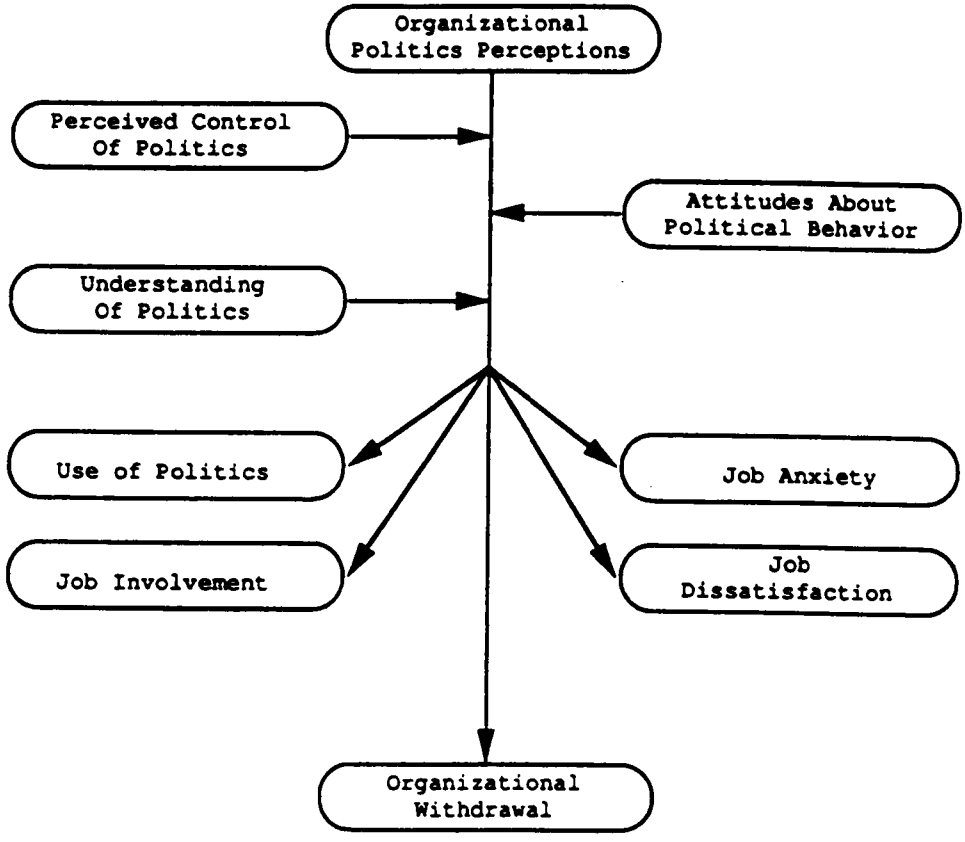


Figure 2.3

Potential Employee Reactions to Organizational Politics.

(Adapted from Ferris, Russ, & Fandt, 1989, p.159)

on satisfaction remained significant when considered alongside other variables such as job autonomy, job variety, performance feedback, and opportunity for promotion. While these results offer no firm conclusion regarding the causal relationship between organizational politics and job satisfaction, they do provide a reasonable basis to suspect that the experience of workplace politics presents a unique source of dissatisfaction to employees.

Similar findings were reported in two studies conducted by Ferris and Kacmar (1992). The first study was based on a sample of 264 employees, of whom 89 were managers for a heavy-equipment manufacturer and 175 were nurses. Respondents completed a variety of measures, including a 5-item measure of politics perceptions (e.g., "Favoritism rather than merit determines who gets ahead around here."), general job satisfaction, job involvement, job autonomy, skill variety, feedback, and opportunity for promotion. Consistent with the Ferris et al. (1989) model, employees who rated their organizations as highly political were less satisfied yet more involved in their jobs. For both job satisfaction and job involvement measures, politics perceptions accounted for a significant portion of the variance beyond that predicted by other variables in the study. The second study was essentially a partial replication of the first, based on a sample of 95 nurses. However, in this study an expanded 31-item measure of

politics perceptions was employed, and job involvement was not assessed. Again, the results revealed a significant inverse relationship between perceptions of organizational politics and employee job satisfaction.

Ferris and colleagues (1993) continued this line of research with two additional studies examining job anxiety, withdrawal, and job dissatisfaction as potential responses to organizational politics. These studies also examined the effects of perceived control over one's work environment as a potential moderator of the above relationships. In the first study, based on a sample of 310 employees of several different organizations, both politics and control were significantly related to the amount of anxiety employees experienced in relation to their jobs. Moreover, the interaction between politics and control was significant such that the relationship between politics perceptions and anxiety was stronger for employees who reported having little control over their work environment. The second study, based on a sample of 386 health-care workers, resulted in a similar pattern of findings. Under conditions of low perceived control, perceptions of politics were found to be more strongly related to both job dissatisfaction and negative evaluations of employment decisions (e.g., "If you could do it all over again, would you take this job?"). However, no moderating effect was found in relation to actual turnover intentions. Although these two studies did

not assess employees' perceptions of control over political aspects of their organizations per se, the results suggest that employees feeling a greater sense of control over their general working environment are less likely to have an adverse response to the presence of political activity in their organizations.

Ferris and colleagues (1994) conducted yet another study of employee reactions to political contexts which focused on both perceptions of control and understanding of events in one's work environment as potential moderating variables. In general, the results of this study, based on a sample of university employees, revealed significant moderating effects for both control and understanding such that employees working in environments that they perceived as highly political were less likely to experience job anxiety, job dissatisfaction, and dissatisfaction with their supervisors when they felt a strong sense of control over and understanding of events in their work environment. Again, while not examining control over and understanding of politics per se, these results are essentially consistent with the propositions outlined in the Ferris et al. (1989) framework.

Collectively, the results of these studies offer support for several of the propositions forwarded by Ferris et al. (1989) and depicted in Figure 2.3. In addition to consistently revealing an inverse relationship between

politics perceptions and employee job satisfaction, the results of these studies suggest that this relationship may be tempered by the extent to which employees understand and feel a sense of control over their work environment. Results also suggest that employees working in a highly political climate may experience greater job anxiety and become more immersed in their jobs. The results of these studies do not support the proposed direct effect of employees' perceptions of politics on turnover intentions, and these studies did not address the proposed link between politics perceptions and one's use of political methods of influence. However, the results from a study which was reviewed earlier (Cheng, 1983) do offer support for the proposition that employees who see their organization as highly political are more likely to engage in political behavior themselves.

While none of these studies represent a comprehensive effort to examine the net impact of organizational politics on corporate performance, the results of these studies suggest that political activity, by virtue of its impact on employee job satisfaction, may yield some adverse consequences for organizations. According to contemporary models of employee responses to dissatisfaction (cf., Rosnowski & Hulin, 1992), such consequences might include, among other things, increased turnover, absenteeism, and theft. Hence, these results suggest that, regardless of whether or not the intended outcomes of political behavior

actually benefit an organization, the side-effects of this behavior (i.e., increased job dissatisfaction among employees) may ultimately detract from any organizational gains it produces.

As a potentially significant source of job dissatisfaction among employees, political activity in organizations represents an important concern for employees, organizations and researchers alike. However, the few studies that have addressed this issue offer only limited insight as to why organizational politics may foster dissatisfaction among employees. According to Ferris et al. (1989), political activity in organizations will only produce dissatisfaction among employees to the extent that the employees view politics in a negative light and/or feel that they are not adept at dealing with political aspects of their organizations. If correct, this perspective would suggest that dissatisfaction associated with organizational politics might be substantially reduced by helping employees to develop both a better understanding of organizational politics and a greater sense of control over the aspects of their work which might require political acuity. However, it remains unclear whether such an approach might effectively reduce the dissatisfaction associated with politics, given that the assumptions on which it is based have not been directly examined in studies concerning employee reactions to political contexts.

These propositions offered by Ferris et al. (1989) focus on political activity itself and employee interpretations thereof as the source of dissatisfaction. However, the research conducted by Ferris and his colleagues (Ferris & Kacmar, 1992; Ferris et al., 1993; Ferris et al., 1994) suggests that not only the activity itself but also the outcomes of political activity may present a source of dissatisfaction to employees. The studies conducted by Ferris and colleagues have all employed variations of the same "Perceptions of Organizational Politics Scale" (Kacmar & Ferris, 1991) which is presented in Figure 2.4. Inspection of these items reveals that many focus not only on political behavior but also on the outcomes of such behavior. Moreover, many of these items focus on outcomes pertaining to issues of fairness or procedural justice (e.g., "Favoritism rather than merit determines who gets ahead around here."). Hence, given that subjects' responses to these items have been found on several occasions to be inversely related to measures of job satisfaction, it seems plausible that political activity in organizations may produce dissatisfaction among employees both directly, by virtue of how the behavior itself is interpreted by employees, and indirectly, by virtue of the perceived fairness of the outcomes produced by this behavior. However, it is difficult to ascertain the exact nature of these relationships based on the studies which have been conducted

1. Favoritism rather than merit determines who gets ahead around here.

2. There is no place for yes-men around here; good ideas are desired even when it means disagreeing with superiors. (RS)

3. You can get along here by being a good guy, regardless of the quality of your work.

4. Employees are encouraged to speak out frankly even if they are critical of well-established ideas. (RS)

5. There are "cliques" or "in-groups" which hinder effectiveness around here.

6. It normally takes only a couple of months for a new employee to figure out who they should not cross around here.

7. You can usually get what you want around here if you know the right person to ask.

8. When objective standards are not specified, it is common to see many people trying to define standards to meet their needs.

9. There has always been an influential group in this department that no one ever crosses.

10. Generally, people who have left this organization did so because they realized that just working hard was not enough to get ahead.

11. People here usually don't speak up for fear of retaliation by others.

12. It seems that the individuals who are able to come through in times of crisis or uncertainty are the ones who get ahead.

13. As long as the actions of others don't directly affect me, I don't care what they do.

14. When my supervisor communicates with me, it is to make himself/herself look better, not to help me.

15. The old saying that the "squeaky wheel gets the grease" really works around here when resources are distributed.

16. Rewards come only to those who work hard in this organization. (RS)

17. People who are willing to voice their opinion seem to do "better" here than those who don't.

18. Promotions in this department generally go to top performers. (RS)

Figure 2.4

Perceptions of Organizational Politics Scale (POPS).

(Kacmar & Ferris, 1991)

19. My co-workers help themselves, not others.

20. I have seen people deliberately distort information requested by others for purposes of personal gain, either by withholding it or selectively reporting it.

21. Managers in this organization often use the selection system to hire only people that can help them in their future or who see things the way they do.

22. People in this organization often use the selection system to hire only people that can help them in their future or who see things the way they do.

23. I have seen changes made in policies here that only serve the purposes of a few individuals, not the work unit or the organization.

24. Overall, the rules and policies around here concerning promotion and pay are specific and well defined. (RS)

25. The rules and policies concerning promotion and pay are fair; it is how supervisors carry out the policies that is unfair and self-serving.

26. When you need help at work, you can always rely on a co-worker to lend a hand. (RS)

27. Connections with other departments are very helpful when it comes time to call in a favor.

28. Whereas a lot of what my supervisor does around here (e.g., communicates and gives feedback, etc.) appears to be directed at helping employees, it is actually intended to protect himself/herself.

29. The performance appraisals/ratings people receive from their supervisors reflect more of the supervisor's "own agenda" (e.g., likes and dislikes, giving high or low ratings to make themselves look good, etc.) than the actual performance of the employee.

30. If a co-worker offers to lend some assistance, it is because they expect to get something out of it (e.g., makes them look good, you owe them a favor now, etc.), not because they really care.

31. Pay and promotion policies are generally communicated in this company. (RS)

Figure 2.4 (continued)

Perceptions of Organizational Politics Scale (POPS).

(Kacmar & Ferris, 1991)

to date because the majority of these studies have included both political activity and the perceived fairness of its outcomes in a single measure of politics perceptions.

Similarly, the majority of these studies concerning employee reactions to organizational politics have employed measures which do not address the multidimensional nature of the organizational politics construct. Political activity in organizations can be classified in terms of a variety of different dimensions such as whether the attempt at political influence succeeds or fails, is initiated by one individual or a group of individuals, involves approval enticing or approval extorting tactics, and/or yields substantial or only trivial outcomes (cf., Schoel & Rush, 1994). Of the many different dimensions of political behavior that have been discussed in the literature, the most prominent concerns whether the behavior in question is congruent or incongruent with an organization's goals (Mayes & Allen, 1977; Porter et al, 1981; Schein, 1977). That is, as discussed earlier, political behavior can be classified according to whether it's aim is to accomplish work-related objectives (congruent goals) or to obtain strictly personal benefits (incongruent goals) for the political actor. It is possible that individuals may respond differently to these two different types of political behavior in organizations. Employees may be less averse to political activity aimed at accomplishing organizational objectives than to political

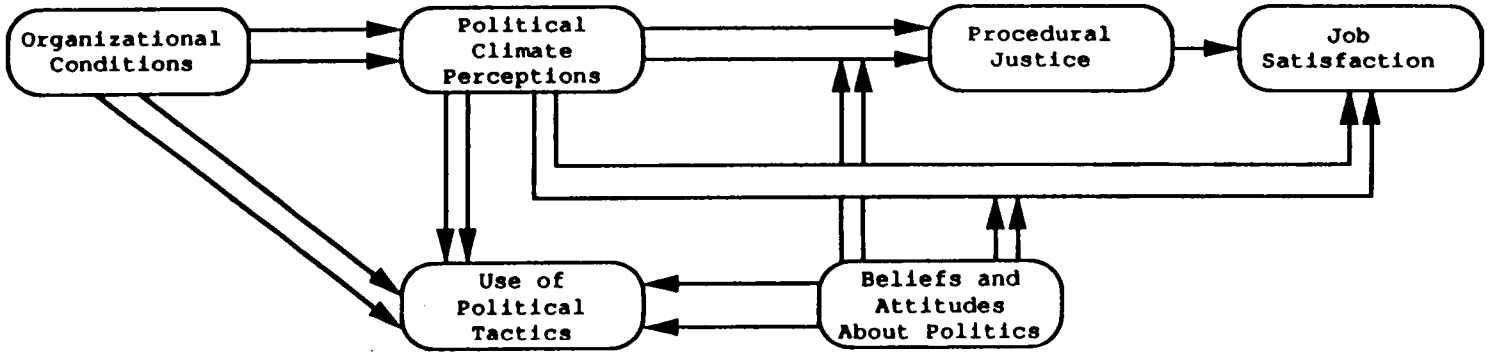
activity focused on obtaining strictly personal benefits because the former type of political activity potentially serves the common good, while the latter does not. However, prior studies of employee reactions to organizational politics have failed to consider this or any other distinction which might offer insight regarding which aspects of political behavior in organizations are most strongly associated with higher levels of job dissatisfaction among employees. Hence, it remains unclear where efforts to manage political activity in organizations might be most productive.

In sum, the research findings regarding political activity in organizations suggest that it may foster higher levels of job dissatisfaction among employees and, hence, should be a matter of some concern for organizations. However, while they point to the need for managers to address this issue, the studies that have been conducted to date offer managers few realistic alternatives for effectively dealing with this problem because these studies provide only limited insight as to what gives rise to political behavior in organizations, why the experience of organizational politics is dissatisfying to employees, and whether employees' reactions to organizational politics may differ according to the nature of the political behavior in question. The present study was designed to help answer these questions.

The Present Study

As noted, prior research findings suggest that political activity in organizations is a source of job dissatisfaction for employees, but these findings offer only limited insight as to what conditions foster this activity, why this activity promotes job dissatisfaction, and whether or not certain types of this activity are more dissatisfying than others. These issues are of considerable import to a better understanding of organizational politics and, hence, the identification of avenues by which any adverse consequences associated with the prevalence of political activity in organizations might be effectively diminished. The present study represents an attempt to shed some light on these issues by concurrently examining several theoretically important antecedents and consequences of organizational politics and how relationships among them may differ depending on both the type of political behavior in question and the nature of employees' views regarding such behavior. Specifically, the purpose of this study is to examine the nature of the relationships among the variables that are depicted in Figure 2.5.

Briefly stated, the model posits that certain organizational conditions foster higher levels of political activity surrounding employees' efforts to accomplish work-related objectives and to obtain personal benefits. Hence, these conditions should affect not only an employee's use of



* Organizational Conditions include: Resource Scarcity, Lack of a Common Goal, and Limited Authority. Double lines indicate separate effects for political activity intended to accomplish Work-Related Objectives and political activity intended to obtain Personal Benefits.

Figure 2.5

Model of Antecedents and Outcomes of Organizational Politics.

political methods to obtain these outcomes but also his or her perceptions regarding the extent to which other employees engage in political behavior for these two purposes (i.e., political climate). These perceptions regarding the political behavior of other organizational members may also affect the extent to which an employee uses political tactics to accomplish his or her work-related objectives or to obtain personal benefits. In addition, employees perceptions of high levels of both of these types of political activity in their organizations should be related to lower levels of job satisfaction both directly and indirectly by virtue of fostering a diminished sense of procedural justice in their organizations. However, according to the model, employees' beliefs and attitudes concerning the use of politics for either work-related objectives or personal benefits should govern their reactions to the prevalence of these two forms of organizational politics such that employees who hold unfavorable views toward either type of political behavior will respond more negatively when confronted with such behavior than will individuals who hold more favorable views. Moreover, the model posits that individuals possessing more favorable views toward either type of political behavior will be more inclined to engage in such behavior. It is also recognized in the model that the organizational conditions which may foster lower levels of

job satisfaction by virtue of the political activity they engender may also present a direct source of job dissatisfaction among employees. The hypotheses on which this model is based are discussed and presented below.

Hypotheses

One objective of this investigation is to develop a better understanding of the organizational conditions that may foster a greater incidence of political activity in the workplace. Though empirical support for such propositions remains limited, several organizational factors have been discussed in the literature as potential instigators of political behavior (see Figure 2.2). Among those that have been discussed are resource scarcity, goal dissensus, and a general lack of formal authority or empowerment among employees. According to contemporary perspectives, to the extent that resources are scarce and/or employees are not bound together by common goals employees will be more likely to engage in political behavior to capture their desired portion of the available resources and to promote their own personal agendas (Pfeffer, 1981, 1992). In addition, such perspectives suggest that when employees do not posses enough formal authority to accomplish important objectives they will resort to the use of political means to achieve their goals (Mintzberg, 1983).

Hence, in the present study it was predicted that these three organizational characteristics, resource scarcity,

lack of a common goal among employees, and limited formal authority among employees, would be positively related to employees' use of politics. While it is recognized that these three variables might be more germane to the use of politics to accomplish work-related objectives (e.g., acquiring work-related resources), they should also bear on the use of politics to obtain personal benefits. For example, when an organization has fewer resources (e.g., wages) to distribute among employees, there might be greater competition and, hence, more political activity among employees as they try to obtain bigger salaries. Therefore, regarding the relationship between these organizational characteristics and employees' use of politics, the following hypotheses were offered:

Hypothesis 1A: Employees will more often engage in political activity to accomplish their work-related objectives to the extent that resources are scarce, there is a lack of a common goal among employees, and formal authority is limited within an organization.

Hypothesis 1B: Employees will more often engage in political activity to obtain personal benefits to the extent that resources are scarce, there is a lack of a common goal among employees, and formal authority is limited within an organization.

Similarly, these conditions should be predictive of not only an employee's use of political methods but also an employee's perceptions regarding the extent to which other organizational members engage in political activity or the "political climate" of the organization. Therefore, the following hypotheses were also offered:

> Hypothesis 2A: Employees will perceive greater amounts of political activity, or a more political climate, surrounding the accomplishment of work-related objectives within an organization to the extent that resources are scarce, there is a lack of a common goal among employees, and formal authority is limited within the organization.
>
> Hypothesis 2B: Employees will perceive greater amounts of political activity, or a more political climate, surrounding attempts to obtain personal benefits within an organization to the extent that resources are scarce, there is a lack of a common goal among employees, and formal authority is limited within the organization.

In addition to examining factors that may foster a greater amount of political activity in organizations, another objective of this study is to develop a better understanding of employee reactions to political climates. According to the model discussed by Ferris et al. (1989; refer to Figure 2.3), employees who are witness to frequent

political activity within their organization may consider it to be a normal aspect of the organizational experience and thus would be more likely to engage in political activity themselves. While, results from a lab study by Cheng (1983) offer some support for this notion, testing this proposition in a field setting might afford greater insight as to the self-perpetuating nature of organizational politics. Hence, in the present study the following hypotheses were offered for examination:

> Hypothesis 3A: Employees will more often engage in political activity to accomplish their work-related objectives to the extent that they perceive other organizational members to do likewise.
>
> Hypothesis 3B: Employees will more often engage in political activity to obtain personal benefits to the extent that they perceive other organizational members to do likewise.

Results from several prior studies of employee reactions to workplace politics suggest that employees who perceive their work environments as highly political tend to be less satisfied with their jobs (Gandz & Murray, 1980; Ferris & Kacmar, 1992; Ferris, et al., 1993; Ferris, et al., 1994). Accordingly, in the present study, it is hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 4A: Employees who perceive greater amounts of political activity aimed at accomplishing work-related objectives to occur within their organization will be less satisfied with their jobs.

Hypothesis 4B: Employees who perceive greater amounts of political activity aimed at obtaining personal benefits to occur within their organization will be less satisfied with their jobs.

It should be noted, however, that the prior studies of employee reactions to political contexts have made no distinctions with regard to employee reactions to different types of organizational politics (e.g., work-related vs. personal). Thus, it is not clear which of these two aspects of an organization's political climate presents the greater source of dissatisfaction among employees. However, such information could provide some insight as to where efforts to manage political activity in organizations might be most productive. This was the impetus for considering the effects of two distinct types of political behavior in the present investigation.

Both forms of political behavior considered in this study are, by definition, illegitimate in the sense that they do not conform to organizationally established or sanctioned means of influence such as the use of formal

authority or reliance upon formal rules, regulations, and procedures. Hence, regardless of whether the behavior in question is aimed at accomplishing work-related objectives or obtaining personal benefits, it remains illegitimate and, thus, a potential source of dissatisfaction among employees when frequently encountered in the workplace. However, while each of these forms of political behavior involve the use of illegitimate means, they differ with respect to the legitimacy of the ends they are intended to accomplish. When aimed at accomplishing work-related objectives (e.g., getting additional help on projects, acquiring needed resources and information, obtaining support for implementation of new ideas or projects), political activity is congruent, or legitimate, with respect to the goals of an organization. By contrast, political activity that is aimed at obtaining strictly personal benefits (e.g., salary increases, promotions, good performance ratings) does not necessarily serve the purposes of an organization and, hence, may be considered illegitimate with respect to both its means and its ends. Therefore, in considering the legitimacy of both the means and the ends of these two forms of organizational politics, political activity aimed at obtaining personal benefits is, on balance, less legitimate and, to the extent that it is viewed as such by employees, may thus present a greater source of dissatisfaction than

political activity aimed at accomplishing work-related objectives. Accordingly, it is hypothesized that:

> Hypothesis 5: Employee perceptions of high levels of political activity aimed at obtaining personal benefits will be more strongly associated with employee job dissatisfaction than will employee perceptions of high levels of political activity aimed at accomplishing work-related objectives within an organization.

Though several prior studies have demonstrated an inverse relationship between perceptions of organizational politics and employee job satisfaction, few have addressed the issue of why highly political climates are dissatisfying to employees. The preceding discussion suggests that political activity within organizations is dissatisfying to employees because they perceive it to be an illegitimate form of behavior in that it does not conform to the formally established authority systems, rules, guidelines, and procedures which govern employee behavior in organizations. Thus, employees may view political influence attempts as a threat to procedural justice within an organization and, hence, be less satisfied working among employees whose actions pose a threat to the fair treatment of other organizational members. Moreover, to the extent that political influence attempts are successful, they may serve to undermine, if not breach, the integrity of systems

designed to maintain procedural justice within an organization. This line of reasoning suggests that the relationship between employee perceptions of politics and job dissatisfaction may be partially mediated by employee perceptions of procedural justice within an organization. Hence, in the present study the following hypotheses were offered for examination:

> Hypothesis 6A: Employees who perceive greater amounts of political activity aimed at accomplishing work-related objectives to occur within their organization will perceive their organization as less procedurally just and, consequently, will be less satisfied with their jobs.
>
> Hypothesis 6B: Employees who perceive greater amounts of political activity aimed at obtaining personal benefits to occur within their organization will perceive their organization as less procedurally just and, consequently, will be less satisfied with their jobs.

These hypotheses are based on the notion that the successful use of any form of political influence undermines the integrity of organizational systems, rules, and procedures and, hence, may foster an increased sense of procedural injustice among employees who are aware of such behavior. Thus, political activity that is intended to

accomplish work-related objectives and political activity that is intended to obtain personal benefits would both, to the extent that they are successful and evident to employees, be expected to foster an increased sense of procedural injustice. However, it is possible that among employees issues of procedural justice may be of greater salience for political behavior that is aimed at obtaining personal benefits than for political behavior that is aimed at accomplishing work-related objectives because a political actor's use of the former type of political influence may be perceived to pose a greater threat to the self-interests of other organizational members. For example, an employee's use of political influence to obtain personal benefits such as a big promotion or choice job assignment may be perceived as a threat to the interests of his or her coworkers because they too might want to be promoted and/or receive the more desirable job assignments. By contrast, an employee's use of politics to accomplish work-related objectives such as support for a new idea or help in completing a particular assignment would not be much of a threat to his or her coworkers. Hence, while employees may consider the successful see of both of these forms of organizational politics to be a breach of procedural justice, they may be more inclined to focus on the injustice associated with political activity used to obtain personal benefits than on the injustice associated with political activity used to

accomplish work-related objectives. To examine this possibility, the following hypothesis was offered for investigation:

> Hypothesis 7: Employee perceptions of high levels of political activity aimed at obtaining personal benefits will be more strongly associated with employee perceptions of procedural injustice in organizations than will employee perceptions of high levels of political activity aimed at accomplishing work-related objectives.

In addition to considering potential adverse reactions that employees may have when confronted with high levels of political activity in the workplace, another objective of this study is to examine the extent to which such reactions might be governed by individuals' attitudes and beliefs concerning political behavior. In their discussion of employee reactions to political contexts, Ferris et al. (1989) proposed that employees' would a have more adverse reaction to the occurrence of political behavior in their organizations to the extent that they maintain unfavorable views toward organizational politics, feel that they do not understand the political dynamics of their organization, and lack a sense of control over the political aspects of their environment. However, these propositions have not been directly tested in previous studies of employee reactions to political contexts. Hence, in an effort to offer some

insight as to the validity of these notions, employee beliefs and attitudes regarding several aspects of organizational politics were assessed in the present study.

Two separate measures, one concerning the use of politics to accomplish work-related objectives and one concerning the use of politics to obtain personal benefits, were constructed to assess the extent to which employees believed each of these two forms of political behavior to be inherently wrong, to have a detrimental impact on organizations, to be preventable, and to be difficult for them to understand or use effectively. In general, it is hypothesized that, to the extent that they endorse each of these views, employees will respond more unfavorably to the presence of political activity in their organizations. Specific hypotheses concerning the role of each of these employee beliefs regarding organizational politics are discussed below.

Much of the research that has been conducted concerning employee reactions to political contexts is based on the implicit assumption that, in general, people hold unfavorable views toward organizational politics and, thus, when confronted with political behavior in their organization, will be affected in an unfavorable way. Indeed, the findings from one of the only studies to examine employees' attitudes towards organizational politics offer some support for this assumption. Gandz and Murray (1980)

reported that respondents in their study generally felt politics to be "bad, unfair, unnecessary, unhealthy, and conflictual". However, the results that were reported by the authors reveal considerable variation in respondents' views toward politics. For example, only 42 percent of respondents disagreed with the statement that "Politics help organizations function effectively". Moreover, a study conducted by Madison and colleagues (1980) revealed that over 85 percent of respondents were able to identify ways in which organizational politics could be helpful to organizations. Though limited, the results of these studies suggest that some employees may not consider political activity in organizations to be an inherently wrong or detrimental practice. Hence, it seems plausible that such individuals might not experience greater job dissatisfaction or stronger perceptions of procedural injustice when confronted with high levels of political activity in their organizations. In the present study, the following hypotheses have been forwarded to examine this possibility:

> Hypothesis 8A: Perceptions of high levels of political activity aimed at accomplishing work-related objectives will be more strongly associated with job dissatisfaction and perceptions of procedural injustice among employees to the extent that they believe such

activity to be inherently wrong and to have a detrimental impact on organizations.

Hypothesis 8B: Perceptions of high levels of political activity aimed at obtaining personal benefits will be more strongly associated with job dissatisfaction and perceptions of procedural injustice among employees to the extent that they believe such activity to be inherently wrong and to have a detrimental impact on organizations.

These hypotheses are essentially consistent with Ferris et al.'s (1989) implicitly expressed notion that employee reactions to the experience of workplace politics will be governed by the extent to which they possess favorable or unfavorable attitudes toward such behavior. Ferris et al. (1989) also suggest that such reactions may be moderated by the extent to which employees feel that they understand and have control over the political aspects of their work environment. More specifically, this perspective holds that individuals who feel that they have a good understanding of the political terrain in their organization and believe that they have the political skills necessary to survive and be effective in a highly political environment might not be as averse to such an environment as individuals having a lower sense of political efficacy. While prior studies concerning employee reactions to organizational politics have examined the moderating effects of variables pertaining to perceived

control over and understanding of one's general environment (Ferris et al, 1993; Ferris et al., 1994), these studies have not focused specifically on issues of perceived control and understanding of one's political environment. Hence, to investigate the possibility that a sense of "political efficacy" might serve to diminish any adverse reactions associated with political activity in organizations, the following hypotheses will be tested in the present study:

Hypothesis 9A: Perceptions of high levels of political activity aimed at accomplishing work-related objectives will be more strongly associated with job dissatisfaction and perceptions of procedural injustice among employees to the extent that they lack an understanding of and feel they have little control over such activity.

Hypothesis 9B: Perceptions of high levels of political activity aimed at obtaining personal benefits will be more strongly associated with job dissatisfaction and perceptions of procedural injustice among employees to the extent that they lack an understanding of and feel they have little control over such activity.

Another variable considered in this study as a potential moderator of employee reactions to workplace politics concerns employees' beliefs regarding whether the

existence of political activity is an inevitable and universal organizational phenomenon or a preventable circumstance which occurs only rarely in most organizations. Though there is insufficient research evidence to fully justify either of these perspectives, the predominant view that has been expressed in the organizational politics literature holds that political activity, while perhaps less prevalent in some organizations than in others, is an inevitable by-product of multiple actors pursuing multiple, often conflicting, goals in systems where limited resources are available (cf., Cyert & March, 1963; Mintzberg, 1983; Pfeffer, 1981). In other words, "Politics in organizations is simply a fact of life" (Ferris et al., 1989).

To the extent that politics is a fact of organizational life, it would seem that individuals who recognize this fact would be less likely to have adverse reactions when confronted with high levels of political activity in their organizations. Such individuals might be less inclined to dwell on the illegitimacy or unfairness of such behavior because, to them, it is a routine part of the organizational experience which, like it or not, is inevitable. By contrast, individuals who hold the belief that most "normal" organizations are relatively apolitical and that the presence of such activity could be eliminated through proper management might be expected to respond more negatively to the occurrence of high levels of political activity in their

work environment. For such individuals, finding themselves in a highly political environment would conflict with their internal standard as to what their work environment should be like. According to Festinger (1950), this inconsistency between such individuals' beliefs and reality may produce a state of discomfort or cognitive dissonance among these individuals, thus making the issues associated with the perceived source of their discomfort particularly salient. If correct, this perspective would suggest that efforts to provide employees with a "realistic preview" of the political nature of organizations may help prevent or alleviate any adverse reactions they might have when faced with political situations. Hence, to evaluate the merit of this perspective the following hypotheses are offered for consideration in the present study:

Hypothesis 10A: Perceptions of high levels of political activity aimed at accomplishing work-related objectives will be more strongly associated with job dissatisfaction and perceptions of procedural injustice among employees to the extent that they believe such activity to be generally preventable and atypical of most organizations.

Hypothesis 10B: Perceptions of high levels of political activity aimed at obtaining personal benefits will be more strongly associated with job

dissatisfaction and perceptions of procedural injustice among employees to the extent that they believe such activity to be generally preventable and atypical of most organizations.

In addition to possibly explaining why some individuals may be more averse to the experience of organizational politics than others, employee attitudes and beliefs about political behavior may also help explain why some individuals are more likely than others to use political influence as a vehicle for accomplishing work-related objectives or obtaining personal benefits. Applied to the topic of political behavior, Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior (1991) posits that employees will be more likely to engage in political behavior to the extent that they maintain favorable attitudes toward the behavior, perceive themselves as capable of effectively engaging in the behavior, and perceive such behavior as a generally accepted practice in the workplace. Hence, according to this theory, an employee's decision to engage in political activity should be influenced not only by his or her prevailing social context (i.e., the level of political activity present in the organization) but also by his or her beliefs and attitudes concerning organizational politics. In an effort to gain a better understanding of what gives rise to organizational politics and, consequently, how this type of activity might be effectively managed, another objective of

this investigation is to examine the extent to which employees' use of political means to accomplish their goals may be more a function of their social context (i.e., political climate) or their general disposition toward politics (i.e., beliefs and attitudes). Given the limits of existing research, it is difficult to make specific hypotheses concerning the relative magnitude of the effects of contextual vs. dispositional factors. However, it is expected that variables reflecting both of these types of factors will be related to the frequency with which employees use political influence to achieve their work-related and personal objectives. Hypotheses specific to the effects of contextual factors were outlined earlier (1 & 3). The hypotheses concerning the effects of dispositional factors to be examined in relation to employees' use of politics are as follows:

Hypothesis 11A: Employees will be less likely to engage in political activity to accomplish work-related objectives to the extent that they believe such activity to be inherently wrong and to have a detrimental impact on organizations.

Hypothesis 11B: Employees will be less likely to engage in political activity aimed at obtaining personal benefits to the extent that they believe such activity to be inherently wrong and to have a detrimental impact on organizations.

Hypothesis 12A: Employees will be less likely to engage in political activity to accomplish work-related objectives to extent that they lack an understanding of and feel they have little control over such activity.

Hypothesis 12B: Employees will be less likely to engage in political activity aimed at obtaining personal benefits to the extent that they lack an understanding of and feel they have little control over such activity.

Hypothesis 13A: Employees will be less likely to engage in political activity to accomplish work-related objectives to the extent that they believe such activity to be generally preventable and atypical of most organizations.

Hypothesis 13B: Employees will be less likely to engage in political activity aimed at obtaining personal benefits to the extent that they believe such activity to be generally preventable and atypical of most organizations.

Summary

Prior research findings suggest that political activity in organizations is a source of job dissatisfaction for employees, but these findings offer only limited insight as to what conditions foster this activity, why this activity promotes job dissatisfaction, and whether or not certain

types of this activity are more dissatisfying than others. These issues are of considerable import to a better understanding of organizational politics and, hence, the identification of avenues by which any adverse consequences associated with the prevalence of political activity in organizations might be effectively diminished. The present study represents an attempt to shed some light on these issues by concurrently examining several theoretically important antecedents and consequences of organizational politics and how relationships among them may differ depending on both the type of political behavior in question and the nature of employees' views regarding such behavior. Specifically, the purpose of this study is to examine the nature of the relationships among the variables that are depicted in Figure 2.5. The hypotheses on which this model is based are summarized in Figure 2.6. The ensuing chapter describes the research methods used to test the proposed model and hypotheses contained therein.

1A: Employees will more often engage in political activity to accomplish their work-related objectives to the extent that resources are scarce, there is a lack of a common goal among employees, and formal authority is limited within an organization.

1B: Employees will more often engage in political activity to obtain personal benefits to the extent that resources are scarce, there is a lack of a common goal among employees, and formal authority is limited within an organization.

2A: Employees will perceive greater amounts of political activity, or a more political climate, surrounding the accomplishment of work-related objectives within an organization to the extent that resources are scarce, there is a lack of a common goal among employees, and formal authority is limited within the organization.

2B: Employees will perceive greater amounts of political activity, or a more political climate, surrounding attempts to obtain personal benefits within an organization to the extent that resources are scarce, there is a lack of a common goal among employees, and formal authority is limited within the organization.

3A: Employees will more often engage in political activity to accomplish their work-related objectives to the extent that they perceive other organizational members to do likewise.

3B: Employees will more often engage in political activity to obtain personal benefits to the extent that they perceive other organizational members to do likewise.

4A: Employees who perceive greater amounts of political activity aimed at accomplishing work-related objectives to occur within their organization will be less satisfied with their jobs.

4B: Employees who perceive greater amounts of political activity aimed at obtaining personal benefits to occur within their organization will be less satisfied with their jobs.

5: Employee perceptions of high levels of political activity aimed at obtaining personal benefits will be more strongly associated with employee job dissatisfaction than will employee perceptions of high levels of political activity aimed at accomplishing work-related objectives within an organization.

6A: Employees who perceive greater amounts of political activity aimed at accomplishing work-related objectives to occur within their organization will perceive their organization as less procedurally just and, consequently, will be less satisfied with their jobs.

6B: Employees who perceive greater amounts of political activity aimed at obtaining personal benefits to occur within their organization will perceive their organization as less procedurally just and, consequently, will be less satisfied with their jobs.

Figure 2.6

Summary of Hypotheses.

7: Employee perceptions of high levels of political activity aimed at obtaining personal benefits will be more strongly associated with employee perceptions of procedural injustice in organizations than will employee perceptions of high levels of political activity aimed at accomplishing work-related objectives.

8A: Perceptions of high levels of political activity aimed at accomplishing work-related objectives will be more strongly associated with job dissatisfaction and perceptions of procedural injustice among employees to the extent that they believe such activity to be inherently wrong and to have a detrimental impact on organizations.

8B: Perceptions of high levels of political activity aimed at obtaining personal benefits will be more strongly associated with job dissatisfaction and perceptions of procedural injustice among employees to the extent that they believe such activity to be inherently wrong and to have a detrimental impact on organizations.

9A: Perceptions of high levels of political activity aimed at accomplishing work-related objectives will be more strongly associated with job dissatisfaction and perceptions of procedural injustice among employees to the extent that they lack an understanding of and feel they have little control over such activity.

9B: Perceptions of high levels of political activity aimed at obtaining personal benefits will be more strongly associated with job dissatisfaction and perceptions of procedural injustice among employees to the extent that they lack an understanding of and feel they have little control over such activity.

10A: Perceptions of high levels of political activity aimed at accomplishing work-related objectives will be more strongly associated with job dissatisfaction and perceptions of procedural injustice among employees to the extent that they believe such activity to be generally preventable and atypical of most organizations.

10B: Perceptions of high levels of political activity aimed at obtaining personal benefits will be more strongly associated with job dissatisfaction and perceptions of procedural injustice among employees to the extent that they believe such activity to be generally preventable and atypical of most organizations.

Figure 2.6 (continued)

Summary of Hypotheses.

11A: Employees will be less likely to engage in political activity aimed at accomplishing work-related objectives to the extent that they believe such activity to be inherently wrong and to have a detrimental impact on organizations.

11B: Employees will be less likely to engage in political activity aimed at obtaining personal benefits to the extent that they believe such activity to be inherently wrong and to have a detrimental impact on organizations.

12A: Employees will be less likely to engage in political activity aimed at accomplishing work-related objectives to extent that they lack an understanding of and feel they have little control over such activity.

12B: Employees will be less likely to engage in political activity aimed at obtaining personal benefits to the extent that they lack an understanding of and feel they have little control over such activity.

13A: Employees will be less likely to engage in political activity to accomplish work-related objectives to the extent that they believe such activity to be generally preventable and atypical of most organizations.

13B: Employees will be less likely to engage in political activity aimed at obtaining personal benefits to the extent that they believe such activity to be generally preventable and atypical of most organizations.

Figure 2.6 (continued)

Summary of Hypotheses.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

Sample and Procedure

Participants in this study consisted of 58 state government executives and up to 5 of each of their coworkers for a sample size of N=323. These individuals represented typical state agencies such as departments of Corrections, Human Services, and Revenue. The sample was 45% female and 89% caucasian, with a mean age of 44.6 years (SD=8.5) and an average of 14.4 years (SD=8.4) of tenure with the state government. Participants had been employed in their current jobs for an average of 4.5 years (SD=4.5).

The data for this study was collected in conjunction with a broader survey which was administered as part of a management development program in which the executives were participating. Surveys were distributed to each participant by the direct supervisor of each of the 58 executives. In a letter accompanying the survey, participants were instructed to return their completed, sealed survey to the individual from whom it was delivered, who would then mail it directly back to the management development program staff. The letter also informed participants of the confidentiality of their responses and that their return of the completed survey was understood as their informed consent to participate. The 323 completed surveys received by the program staff represented 90% of the 360 surveys that were originally distributed.

Measures

Guided by a consideration of the relevant constructs, a review of measures used in prior research, and pilot-testing results (see Appendix A), the measures described below were developed to assess the variables of interest in the present investigation. The reliability estimates (α) reported with each measure refer to the internal consistency of the items comprising each scale.

Antecedent Conditions. A nine-item measure was used to assess respondents views concerning the extent to which conditions of Resource Scarcity, Lack of a Common Goal, and Limited Authority are characteristic of their department or organization (see Figure 3.1). Respondents were instructed to indicate the extent to which each item was characteristic of their department using a 5-point Likert scale with anchors ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "undecided" (3) to "strongly agree" (5).

Of these nine items, three were designed to assess the extent to which employees feel that sufficient resources are not available to implement solutions to problems encountered by members of their department. High scores on this subscale (α=.74) are indicative of high levels of perceived resource scarcity.

The degree to which employees lack a common goal or sense of purpose was assessed with three items taken from the Climate subscale of the Stress Diagnostic Survey

The following questions refer to conditions that may be characteristic of your department. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each statement using this scale.

1: strongly DISAGREE
2: slightly disagree
3: undecided
4: slightly agree
5: strongly AGREE

(resource scarcity)

_____ Resources needed to implement changes quickly are available to managers in my department. (RS)

_____ The resources needed to implement solutions to key organizational problems are generally absent.

_____ A lack of resources prevents the implementation of solutions to key organizational problems.

(lack of common goal)

_____ Employees do not understand the mission and goals of this organization.

_____ The overall strategy of the organization is not well understood by the employees.

_____ The organization lacks direction and mission.

(limited authority)

_____ There are too many approvals required to implement changes quickly in my department.

_____ The formal structure of the organization has too much red tape.

_____ Tight controls and too many levels of authorization inhibit our capacity to act on important problems.

Figure 3.1

Measure of Antecedents to Organizational Politics.

(Ivancevich & Matteson, 1980) which focus on the extent to which respondents feel that employees in their organization understand or identify with the organization's mission and goals. Higher scores on this subscale (α=.81) indicate a lower degree of perceived employee identification with or understanding of the organization's main goals or mission.

An additional three items were designed to assess the degree to which employees perceive organizational policies, procedures, and authority systems to limit organizational members' ability to address important problems and implement solutions in an effective and timely manner. Higher scores on this subscale (α=.78) reflect perceptions of greater limits to departmental members' formal authority.

Political Climate Perceptions. An eight-item measure was designed to assess employees' perceptions regarding the extent to which members of their organization use politics to accomplish their work-related objectives or to obtain personal benefits (Figure 3.2). Presented with a description of political behavior labeled "personal influence", subjects were asked to indicate how frequently other people in their organization used their personal influence when trying to obtain four different work-related outcomes (i.e, resources, information, cooperation, approval to implement new ideas) and four different personal outcomes (i.e., good performance ratings, salary increases, promotions, better assignments). Subjects indicated their responses using a 5-point scale

In addition to following formally established procedures and working through official channels, employees may also use their personal influence to accomplish their work-related objectives or to obtain personal benefits. For example, they may rely on their connections with influential people, offer an exchange of favors, or use various forms of persuasion to influence others in order to achieve their goals. The following questions concern the use of personal influence in your organization. Please use the following scale to record your responses.

1: Never
2: Rarely
3: Occasionally
4: Frequently
5: Usually

How often do OTHER PEOPLE in your organization use their personal influence when trying to obtain ...

(work-related objectives)

_____ The resources needed to accomplish work objectives?

_____ Important work-related information?

_____ Cooperation in completing assignments or projects?

_____ Approval to implement new projects or ideas?

(personal benefits)

_____ Personal recognition or good performance ratings?

_____ A salary increase or bonus pay?

_____ A promotion or a transfer to another department?

_____ A better work schedule or job assignment?

Figure 3.2

Measure of Political Climate Perceptions.

with anchors ranging from "never" (1) to "occasionally" (3) to "usually" (5). Higher scores on each subscale reflect perceptions of a greater amount of political activity or a more political climate surrounding organizational members' attempts to accomplish work-related objectives (α=.89) and to obtain personal benefits (α=.91).

Use of Politics. The extent to which respondents use specific political tactics when trying to accomplish their work-related objectives was assessed 10 items from Kipnis, Schmidt, and Wilkinson's (1980) and Schriesheim and Hinkin's (1990) measures of specific tactics used by subordinates to influence their supervisors (Figure 3.3). The tactics include Ingratiation, Offering Exchanges, Coalition Formation, Upward Appeals, and Assertiveness. Respondents were asked to indicate how often they used each strategy to influence their supervisor when asking him or her to consider work-related requests and were provided examples of several work-related requests (e.g., for additional resources). Responses were made using a 5-point Likert scale with anchors ranging from "never" (1) to "occasionally" (3) to "usually" (5). High scores on this scale (α=.81) reflect a more frequent use of political tactics by respondents to accomplish their organizational objectives.

A separate set of the 10 items described above was used to assess respondents' use of political tactics to obtain personal benefits (Figure 3.4). Respondents were asked to

How often have YOU used the following strategies to influence your supervisor when seeking approval for a work-related request (e.g., for needed resources, help in getting projects completed, approval to implement new ideas/projects)?

1: Never
2: Rarely
3: Occasionally
4: Frequently
5: Usually

_____ Acted in a friendly manner prior to making my request.

_____ Offered to make a personal sacrifice if he or she would do what I wanted.

_____ Had a showdown in which I confronted him or her face-to-face.

_____ Relied on people higher up in the organization who have power over him or her.

_____ Obtained the support of co-workers to back up my request.

_____ Made him or her feel good about me before making my request.

_____ Offered an exchange (e.g., if you do this for me, I will do something for you).

_____ Used a forceful manner (e.g., demands, the setting of deadlines, and the expression of strong emotion).

_____ Made an appeal to higher levels to support my request.

_____ Asked some of my co-workers to help me influence him or her.

Figure 3.3

Measure of Individual Use of Politics

To Accomplish Work-Related Objectives.

How often have YOU used the following strategies to influence your supervisor when seeking approval for a personal request (e.g., for better pay, better job assignments, an improved work schedule, time off, good performance ratings, a promotion or transfer)?

1: Never
2: Rarely
3: Occasionally
4: Frequently
5: Usually

_____ Made an appeal to higher levels to support my request.

_____ Made him or her feel good about me before making my request.

_____ Asked some of my co-workers to help me influence him or her.

_____ Offered to make a personal sacrifice if he or she would do what I wanted.

_____ Used a forceful manner (e.g., demands, the setting of deadlines, and the expression of strong emotion).

_____ Relied on people higher up in the organization who have power over him or her.

_____ Acted in a friendly manner prior to making my request.

_____ Obtained the support of co-workers to back up my request.

_____ Offered an exchange (e.g., if you do this for me, I will do something for you).

_____ Had a showdown in which I confronted him or her face-to-face.

Figure 3.4

Measure of Individual Use of

Politics to Obtain Personal Benefits.

indicate how often they used each strategy to influence their supervisor when asking him or her to consider a personal request and were provided with examples of several personal requests (e.g., for better pay). Higher scores on this scale (α=.83) reflect a more frequent use of political tactics by respondents to obtain personal benefits.

Attitudes About Politics. A 16-item measure was constructed to assess subjects' attitudes regarding the use of political tactics to accomplish work-related objectives (Figure 3.5). In this measure, respondents were provided a definition of organizational politics and examples of several work-related objectives which employees might use political tactics to accomplish. Subjects were then asked to indicate the degree to which each item is indicative of their attitudes about this type of political behavior using a 5-point Likert scale with anchors ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "undecided" (3) to "strongly agree" (5).

More specifically, this measure consists of three subscales labeled Receptivity, Inevitability, and Efficacy. The Receptivity scale (8 items; α=.90) focuses on the extent to which respondents believe the use of politics to accomplish work-related objectives to be an ethical and beneficial organizational practice rather than a dishonest and harmful class of employee of behavior. The Inevitability scale (4 items; α=.75) is comprised of items which assess the extent to which respondents believe that employees' use

of politics to accomplish work-related objectives is an inevitable fact of life in all organizations or, conversely, a preventable type of activity which rarely occurs in most organizations. The Efficacy scale (4 items; α=.82) contains items which assess respondents' beliefs about the extent to which they understand, are capable of effectively using, and are able to work effectively with others who use political tactics to accomplish their work-related objectives. Higher scores on each of these subscales reflect higher levels of Receptivity, perceived Inevitability, and Efficacy regarding the use of politics to accomplish work-related objectives.

A similar 16-item measure was constructed to assess subjects' attitudes regarding the use of political tactics to obtain personal benefits (Figure 3.6). Respondents were presented with a definition of organizational politics and examples of several types of personal benefits which employees might use political tactics to obtain. Subjects were then asked to indicate the degree to which each item is indicative of their attitudes about this type of political behavior using a 5-point Likert scale with anchors ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "undecided" (3) to "strongly agree" (5). For each of the three subscales included in the measure, higher scores reflect higher levels of Receptivity (8 items; α=.89), perceived Inevitability (4 items; α=.71), and Efficacy (4 items; α=.82) regarding the use of politics to obtain personal benefits.

Directions: **Organizational Politics** refers to actions that are not officially authorized by an organization and are aimed at influencing others in order to accomplish work-related objectives or to obtain personal benefits. The following statements concern the use of politics to accomplish work-related objectives. Please read the examples provided and then indicate the extent to which you agree with each statement using the following scale:

1: Strongly DISAGREE
2: Slightly Disagree
3: Undecided
4: Slightly Agree
5: Strongly AGREE

WORK-RELATED OBJECTIVES: Getting additional help on projects, obtaining needed resources and information, gaining approval to implement new ideas or projects.

_____ 1. Using political methods to accomplish work-related objectives is unethical. (RS)

_____ 2. Employees' use of politics to accomplish work-related objectives is an unavoidable fact of life in any organization.

_____ 3. The use of politics to accomplish work-related objectives is detrimental to organizational effectiveness. (RS)

_____ 4. I have a very good understanding of how political methods can be used to accomplish one's work-related objectives.

_____ 5. There is nothing immoral about using political tactics to accomplish work-related objectives.

_____ 6. It would be almost impossible to prevent employees from using politics to accomplish their work-related objectives.

Figure 3.5

Measure of Individual Attitudes About the Use

of Politics to Accomplish Work-Related Objectives.

_____ 7. Employees' use of politics to accomplish work-related objectives helps organizations function effectively.

_____ 8. I have the political skills necessary to accomplish my work-related objectives in a highly political organization.

_____ 9. It is dishonest to use political tactics to accomplish work-related objectives. (RS)

_____ 10. In most organizations, employees use political methods to accomplish their work-related objectives.

_____ 11. The use of politics to accomplish work-related objectives creates an atmosphere of conflict, mistrust and tension in organizations. (RS)

_____ 12. I would not be good at using political methods to accomplish my work-related objectives. (RS)

_____ 13. It is wrong for employees to use political tactics to accomplish their work-related objectives. (RS)

_____ 14. Employees will inevitably use politics to accomplish work-related objectives that cannot be accomplished through official channels.

_____ 15. The use of politics to accomplish work-related objectives does more harm than good in organizations. (RS)

_____ 16. I could be very successful in an organization where politics play an important role in accomplishing work-related objectives.

Figure 3.5 (continued)

Measure of Individual Attitudes About the Use

of Politics to Accomplish Work-Related Objectives.

Directions: **Organizational Politics** refers to actions that are not officially authorized by an organization and are aimed at influencing others in order to accomplish work-related objectives or to obtain personal benefits. The following statements concern the use of politics to obtain personal benefits. Please read the examples provided and then indicate the extent to which you agree with each statement using the following scale:

1: Strongly DISAGREE
2: Slightly Disagree
3: Undecided
4: Slightly Agree
5: Strongly AGREE

PERSONAL BENEFITS: Salary increases, better job assignments, promotions, better work schedules, good performance ratings, time off, personal recognition.

_____ 1. In most organizations, employees use political methods to help them obtain personal benefits.

_____ 2. I have the political skills necessary to obtain personal benefits in a highly political organization.

_____ 3. Employees' use of politics to obtain personal benefits helps organizations function effectively.

_____ 4. It is dishonest to use political tactics to obtain personal benefits. (RS)

_____ 5. Employees' use of politics to obtain personal benefits is an unavoidable fact of life in any organization.

_____ 6. I have a very good understanding of how political methods can be used to obtain personal benefits.

Figure 3.6

Measure of Individual Attitudes About the

Use of Politics to Obtain Personal Benefits.

_____ 7. The use of politics to obtain personal benefits does more harm than good in organizations. (RS)

_____ 8. It is wrong for employees to use political tactics to obtain personal benefits. (RS)

_____ 9. Employees will inevitably use politics to obtain personal benefits that cannot be obtained through official channels.

_____ 10. I could be very successful in an organization where politics play an important role in obtaining personal benefits.

_____ 11. The use of politics to obtain personal benefits is detrimental to organizational effectiveness. (RS)

_____ 12. Using political methods to obtain personal benefits is unethical. (RS)

_____ 13. It would be almost impossible to prevent employees from using politics to better their chances of receiving personal benefits.

_____ 14. I would not be very good at using political methods to obtain personal benefits. (RS)

_____ 15. The use of politics to obtain personal benefits creates an atmosphere of conflict, mistrust and tension in organizations. (RS)

_____ 16. There is nothing immoral about using political tactics to obtain personal benefits.

Figure 3.6 (continued)

Measure of Individual Attitudes About the

Use of Politics to Obtain Personal Benefits.

Procedural Justice. Three items based on Thibaut and Walker's (1975) conceptualization of Procedural Justice were constructed to assess the extent to which respondents believe their organization to be procedurally just or fair in its treatment of employees (i.e., "My department has procedures to ensure that all employees are treated fairly"; "Management takes great effort to make decisions fairly"; "This organization is a fair place to work"). Subjects were asked to indicate their level of agreement with each item using a 5-point Likert scale with anchors ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "undecided" (3) to "strongly agree" (5). Higher scores on this measure (α=.80) reflect higher levels of perceived procedural justice.

Job Satisfaction. Three items from the Job Diagnostic Survey (Hackman & Oldham, 1975) were used to assess the extent to which employees' derived a sense of General Satisfaction from their job (i.e., "Generally speaking, I am very satisfied with my job"; "I am generally satisfied with the kind of work I do in this job"; "I am satisfied with the amount of personal growth and development I get in doing my job"). Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree with each item using a 5-point Likert scale with anchors ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "undecided" (3) to "strongly agree" (5). Higher scores on this measure (α=.77) reflect higher job satisfaction.

Analyses

Pilot Study. Before conducting the main study, a pilot study was conducted to examine the psychometric properties of the measures described above, and a power analysis was performed to determine how large a sample would be required to afford a reasonable likelihood of detecting significant relationships among variables of interest. These analyses, their results, and their implications for this research are described in Appendix A. Analyses central to the main study are described below.

Main Study. Prior to conducting formal tests of the hypotheses that were offered for examination in this study, several analyses were performed to, once again, examine the psychometric properties of the measures that were used to obtain data regarding the variables of interest. Evaluation of these measures proceeded with principal components factor analyses using orthogonal factor rotation and scree tests to facilitate interpretation. Internal consistency reliability estimates and item-total correlations were then obtained for each measure and/or subscale. These analyses, coupled with an examination of the response distributions for each scale, were performed to ascertain whether any scale modifications would be necessary or desirable prior to hypothesis testing.

Each of the hypotheses offered for examination in this study focus on a specific portion of the broader framework of relationships that are depicted in Figure 2.5. Hence, in

addition to separately testing each of these hypotheses via simple and hierarchical multiple regression techniques, it was deemed to be potentially more informative to examine these hypotheses concurrently in a single test of the full framework of hypothesized relationships. Such a procedure would afford a better understanding of unique relationships between the variables of interest. Specifically, a manifest-variable structural equations analysis of the observed variance-covariance matrix was performed using LISREL VII (Joreskog & Sorbom, 1989) to concurrently estimate the hypothesized direct and indirect linkages (i.e., main and mediated effects) between study variables as depicted in Figure 2.5. However, due to LISREL's limited flexibility for examining moderated relationships, hypotheses specific to the role of employee attitudes concerning politics as moderator variables were tested separately using multiple regression techniques. The hypotheses involving proposed differences in effect sizes were also tested separately via t-tests for differences in dependent correlations.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

In four main sections, this chapter describes the results of this study. Presented first are the results of analyses conducted to examine the psychometric properties of the measures that were used to gather data for the research. The second section of the chapter presents the descriptive statistics for these measures and the results obtained from a variety of analyses conducted to test the research hypotheses. Supplemental analyses and their results are reported in section three. Section four contains a summary of the results, reviewing each of the original hypotheses and the extent to which it was either supported or not supported by the research findings.

Evaluation of Measures

Prior to hypothesis-testing, subjects' responses to items comprising the measures of interest were factor-analyzed and the internal consistency reliability of each measure was estimated. This was done to examine the psychometric properties of and enable consideration of possible modifications to these measures. The results of these analyses are described below.

Factor Structure. To maintain a satisfactory ratio between the number of items submitted to factor analysis and the number of subjects responding to these items (at least a 1 to 5 ratio; Tabachnick & Fidell, 1989), the survey items

were divided into three qualitatively different sets for factor-analytic purposes. The first set was comprised of items focusing on subjects' interpretations and evaluations of their general work environment (i.e., Resource Scarcity, Lack of a Common Goal, Limited Authority, Work-Related Political Climate, Personal Benefits-Oriented Political Climate, Procedural Justice and Job Satisfaction). The second set included items designed to assess subjects' beliefs and attitudes regarding the use of political tactics either to accomplish work-related objectives or to obtain personal benefits. The third set of items were those which pertain to subjects' self-reported use of political methods to accomplish work-related objectives or obtain personal benefits. For each of these three sets of items, principal components factor analyses, coupled with orthogonal factor rotations and scree tests, were used to guide interpretation of the data.

Analysis of the first set of items yielded a seven factor solution which accounted for 74.6% of the variance in the data. Examination of the rotated factor loadings (presented in Table 4.1) revealed that all of the 23 items included in this analysis grouped in a manner consistent with the measures for which they were intended. These results suggest that measures designed to assess Personal Benefits-Oriented Political Climate, Work-Related Political Climate, Job Satisfaction, Procedural Justice, Limited

Table 4.1

Factor Analysis of Core Model

		Rotated Factor Loadings						
	Items	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
PB_PC3	A promotion or a transfer to another department?	.89						
PB_PC2	A salary increase or bonus pay?	.86						
PB_PC4	A better work schedule or job assignment?	.81						
PB_PC1	Personal recognition or good performance ratings?	.76						
WR_PC3	Cooperation in completing assignments or projects?		.87					
WR_PC2	Important work-related information?		.87					
WR_PC1	The resources needed to accomplish work objectives?		.79					
WR_PC4	Approval to implement new projects or ideas?		.75					
JS2	I am generally satisfied with the kind of work I do in this job.			.85				
JS1	Generally speaking, I am very satisfied with my job.			.79				
JS3	I am satisfied with the amount of personal growth and development I get in doing my job.			.76				
PJ1	My department has procedures to ensure that all employees are treated fairly.				.81			
PJ2	Management takes great effort to make decisions fairly.				.73			
PJ3	This organization is a fair place to work.				.70			
LA2	The formal structure of this organization has too much red tape.					.82		
LA1	There are too many approvals required to implement changes quickly in my department.					.81		
LA3	Tight controls and too many levels of authorization inhibit our capacity to act on important problems.					.67		
LCO1	Employees do not understand the mission and goals of the organization.						.88	
LCO2	The overall strategy of the organization is not well understood by the employees.						.83	
LCO3	The organization lacks direction and mission.				-.42		.65	
RS3	A lack of resources prevents the implementation of solutions to key organizational problems.							.84
RS2	The resources needed to implement solutions to key organizational problems are generally absent.							.79
RS1	Resources needed to implement changes quickly are available to managers in may department. (RS)							.61
	Eigenvalue:	6.68	3.57	1.96	1.60	1.24	1.08	1.01
	Percent of Total Variance:	29.1	15.5	8.5	7.0	5.4	4.7	4.4

Note: PB_PC=Political Climate re: Personal Benefits; WR_PC=Political Climate re: Work-Related Objectives; PJ=Procedural Justice; LA=Limited Authority; LCO=Lack Common Objectives; RS=Resource Scarcity; JS=Job Satisfaction; Loadings <.40 omitted.

Authority, Lack of Common Objectives, and Resource Scarcity were relatively independent of one another. Hence, no modifications were made to the measures of these study variables.

The second set of items submitted to factor analysis were those assessing subjects' attitudes about the use of politics to accomplish work-related objectives or to obtain personal benefits. Specifically, these items were designed to assess subjects' Receptivity, perceived Inevitability, and Efficacy regarding the use of politics to accomplish work-related objectives and their Receptivity, perceived Inevitability, and Efficacy regarding the use of politics to obtain personal benefits. These 32 items were thus intended to reflect six factors. However, the factor-analytic results indicated that subjects' responses to these items reflected but four factors, which accounted for 57.1 % of the variance in the data. Examination of the rotated factor loadings (presented in Table 4.2) revealed that two of these factors were consistent with the a priori specification of items pertaining to Receptivity to Work-Related Politics (Factor 1) and Receptivity to Personal Benefits-Oriented Politics (Factor 2). However, all of the items focusing on political Efficacy (for Work-Related and Personal Benefits-Oriented politics) loaded on the same factor (Factor 3), as did all of the items regarding the Inevitability of organizational politics (Factor 4). Although these results are not fully

Table 4.2

Factor Analysis of Attitude Measures

	Items	Rotated Factor Loadings 1	2	3	4
WR_R4	It is wrong for employees to use political tactics to accomplish their work-related objectives. (RS)	.79			
WR_R8	The use of politics to accomplish work-related objectives does more harm than good in organizations. (RS)	.77			
WR_R7	The use of politics to accomplish work-related objectives creates an atmosphere of conflict, mistrust and tension in organizations. (RS)	.76			
WR_R6	Employees' use of politics to accomplish work-related objectives helps organizations function effectively.	.75			
WR_R3	It is dishonest to use political tactics to accomplish work-related objectives. (RS)	.72			
WR_R1	Using political methods to accomplish work-related objectives is unethical. (RS)	.68			
WR_R2	There is nothing immoral about using political tactics to accomplish work-related objectives.	.67			
WR_R5	The use of politics to accomplish work-related objectives is detrimental to organizational effectiveness. (RS)	.65			
PB_R3	Using political methods to obtain personal benefits is unethical. (RS)		.81		
PB_R2	It is wrong for employees to use political tactics to obtain personal benefits. (RS)		.81		
PB_R6	The use of politics to obtain personal benefits does more harm than good in organizations. (RS)		.80		
PB_R7	The use of politics to obtain personal benefits is detrimental to organizational effectiveness. (RS)		.79		
PB_R8	The use of politics to obtain personal benefits creates an atmosphere of conflict, mistrust, tension in organizations. (RS)		.76		
PB_R4	There is nothing immoral about using political tactics to obtain personal benefits.		.64		
PB_R1	It is dishonest to use political tactics to obtain personal benefits. (RS)		.61		
PB_R5	Employees' use of politics to obtain personal benefits helps organizations function effectively.		.48		
PB_E1	I have the political skills necessary to obtain personal benefits in a highly political organization.			.82	
WR_E2	I have the political skills necessary to accomplish my work-related objectives in a highly political organization.			.76	
PB_E3	I could be very successful in an organization where politics play an important role in obtaining personal benefits.			.74	
WR_E4	I could be very successful in an organization where politics play an important role in accomplishing work-related objectives.			.70	
PB_E2	I have a very good understanding of how political methods can be used to obtain personal benefits.			.68	
WR_E3	I would not be very good at using political methods to accomplish my work-related objectives. (RS)	.44		.66	
WR_E1	I have a very good understanding of how political methods can be used to accomplish one's work-related objectives.			.66	
PB_E4	I would not be very good at using political methods to obtain personal benefits. (RS)		.51	.52	
PB_I3	Employees will inevitably use politics to obtain personal benefits that cannot be obtained through official channels.				.74
PB_I2	Employees' use of politics to obtain personal benefits is an unavoidable fact of life in any organization.				.69
WR_I4	Employees will inevitably use politics to accomplish work-related objectives that cannot be accomplished through official channels.				.68
WR_I2	It would be almost impossible to prevent employees from using politics to accomplish their work-related objectives.				.66
PB_I1	In most organizations, employees use political methods to help them obtain personal benefits.				.62
WR_I3	In most organizations, employees use political methods to accomplish their work-related objectives.				.61
PB_I4	It would be almost impossible to prevent employees from using politics to better their chances of receiving personal benefits.				.57
WR_I1	Employees' use of politics to accomplish work-related objectives is an unavoidable fact of life in any organization.				.56
	Eigenvalue:	9.66	3.45	2.90	2.23
	Percent of Total Variance:	30.2	10.8	9.1	7.0

Note: WR=politics re: Work-Related Objectives; PB=politics re: Personal Benefits; R=Receptivity; E=Efficacy; I=Inevitability. Factor loadings less than .40 have been omitted for clarity.

consistent with the a priori distinction between attitudes specific to Work-Related versus Personal Benefits-oriented political activity, they are indicative of the relative independence of measures designed to assess different attitudes (i.e., Receptivity vs. Inevitability vs. Efficacy). Hence, given that the hypotheses necessitate a distinction between subjects' attitudes specific to two conceptually distinct classes of political behavior, six separate attitude measures - three focusing on work-related politics and three focusing on personal benefits-oriented politics - were retained for analysis.

The third factor analysis involved items designed to assess subjects' use of different political influence tactics (i.e., Ingratiation, Exchange, Coalitions, Assertiveness, Upward Appeal). Ten items focused on the use of these political tactics to accomplish work-related objectives, and ten items focused on the use of these tactics to obtain personal benefits. The factor analysis of these twenty items yielded a six factor solution, accounting for 74.9% of the variance in the data. Examination of the rotated factor loadings (presented in Table 4.3) revealed that the items were generally differentiated according to the specific type of political tactic they assessed (i.e., Ingratiation, Exchange, Coalitions, Assertiveness) rather than according to the reasons for using such tactics (i.e.,

Table 4.3

Factor Analysis of Tactic Measures

	Items	Rotated Factor Loadings 1	2	3	4	5	6
WR_IN1	Acted in a friendly manner prior to making my request.	.85					
PB_IN2	Acted in a friendly manner prior to making my request.	.83					
PB_IN1	Made him or her feel good about me prior to making my request.	.77					
WR_IN2	Made him or her feel good about me prior to making my request.	.74					
PB_EX2	Offered an exchange (e.g., if you do this for me, I will do something for you).		.84				
WR_EX2	Offered an exchange (e.g., if you do this for me, I will do something for you).		.80				
PB_EX1	Offered to make a personal sacrifice if he or she would do what I wanted.		.80				
WR_EX1	Offered to make a personal sacrifice if he or she would do what I wanted.	.42	.69				
WR_CO2	Asked some of my co-workers to help me influence him or her.			.76			
WR_CO1	Obtained the support of co-workers to back up my request.			.75			
PB_CO2	Obtained the support of co-workers to back up my request.			.71			.41
PB_CO1	Asked some of my co-workers to help me influence him or her.			.68			
WR_AS2	Used a forceful manner (e.g., demands, the setting of deadlines, and the expression of strong emotion).				.78		
PB_AS1	Used a forceful manner (e.g., demands, the setting of deadlines, and the expression of strong emotion).				.77		
WR_AS1	Had a showdown in which I confronted him or her face-to-face.				.70		
PB_AS2	Had a showdown in which I confronted him or her face-to-face.				.65		.52
WR_UP1	Relied on people higher up in the organization who have power over him or her.					.84	
WR_UP2	Made an appeal to higher levels to support my request.					.82	
PB_UP2	Relied on people higher up in the organization who have power over him or her.					.45	.74
PB_UP1	Made an appeal to higher levels to support my request.					.42	.72
	Eigenvalue:	7.15	2.61	1.55	1.44	1.16	1.06
	Percent of Total Variance:	35.8	13.1	7.7	7.2	5.8	5.3

Note: WR=used to accomplish Work-Related Objectives; PB=used to obtain Personal Benefits; IN=Ingratiation; EX=Exchange; CO=Coalition; AS=Assertiveness; UP=Upward Appeal. Factor loadings less than .40 have been omitted for clarity.

accomplishing work-related objectives vs. obtaining personal benefits). The exceptions to this general pattern of findings were for those items assessing the use of Upward Appeal to accomplish Work-Related Objectives (Factor 5) and to obtain Personal Benefits (Factor 6). These results suggest that, in addition to using measures of subjects' combined use of these five different political tactics for either work-related or personal benefits-oriented purposes, it might also be informative to examine tactic-specific subscales for these measures. This would enable a better understanding of the particular types of political behavior likely to be engendered by the diverse array of predictors considered in this study. Accordingly, the original measures of subjects' combined use of the different tactics were used to test the hypotheses that were offered, and supplemental analyses were conducted to examine possible tactic-specific relationships among the variables of interest.

Internal Consistency. Given the generally supportive factor-analytic results for most of the measures that were used in this study and the desire to maintain measurement distinctions consistent with the hypotheses offered for examination (i.e., work-related vs. personal benefits-oriented politics), none of these 15 measures were modified prior to examining their internal consistency (α). Internal consistency reliability estimates were obtained which ranged from α=.71 to α=.91, suggesting that these measures were of

acceptable quality for research purposes (cf., Nunnally, 1978). Moreover, an inspection of the item-total correlations for each of these measures indicated that the internal consistency reliability of these scales would not be substantially improved by the removal of any of the originally specified scale items. Therefore, no alterations were made to any of these measures.

Tests of Hypotheses

A variety of statistical techniques were used to test the hypotheses of interest. These hypotheses are summarized in notational form in Figure 4.1. Correlations were computed to examine the hypothesized main effects among the variables of interest (i.e., Hypotheses 1, 2, 3, 4, 11, 12, & 13). Multiple regression analyses were used to examine moderated and mediated relationships (i.e., Hypotheses 6, 8, 9, & 10). T-tests for differences in dependent correlations were used to compare the magnitudes of certain relationships among the study variables (i.e., Hypotheses 5 & 7).

In addition, structural equations analyses were used to concurrently examine the hypothesized direct and indirect linkages (i.e., main and mediated effects) among the study variables in order to afford a better understanding of the unique contribution of each variable within the broader framework of hypothesized relationships that is depicted in Figure 4.2. Results from these analyses are reported below.

1A: Resource Scarcity ⇒
Lack of Common Goal ⇒ (+) ⇒ WR Politics
Limited Authority ⇒ Use of Tactics

1B: Resource Scarcity ⇒
Lack of Common Goal ⇒ (+) ⇒ PB Politics
Limited Authority ⇒ Use of Tactics

2A: Resource Scarcity ⇒
Lack of Common Goal ⇒ (+) ⇒ WR Political
Limited Authority ⇒ Climate

2B: Resource Scarcity ⇒
Lack of Common Goal ⇒ (+) ⇒ PB Political
Limited Authority ⇒ Climate

3A: WR Political ⇒ (+) ⇒ WR Politics
Climate Use of Tactics

3B: PB Political ⇒ (+) ⇒ PB Politics
Climate Use of Tactics

4A: WR Political ⇒ (-) ⇒ Job
Climate Satisfaction

4B: PB Political ⇒ (-) ⇒ Job
Climate Satisfaction

5: Magnitude of Relationship 4B (>) Magnitude of Relationship 4A

6A: WR Political ⇒ (-) ⇒ Procedural ⇒ (+) ⇒ Job
Climate Justice Satisfaction

6B: PB Political ⇒ (-) ⇒ Procedural ⇒ (+) ⇒ Job
Climate Justice Satisfaction

7: Magnitude of Relationship 6B (>) Magnitude of Relationship 6A

Figure 4.1

Notational Summary of Hypotheses.

(WR=Work-Related; PB=Personal Benefits-Oriented)

8A: WR Political Climate ⇒ (-) ⇒ Procedural Justice
⇒ (-) ⇒ Job Satisfaction
⇑ (-) ⇑
WR Politics Receptivity

8B: PB Political Climate ⇒ (-) ⇒ Procedural Justice
⇒ (-) ⇒ Job Satisfaction
⇑ (-) ⇑
PB Politics Receptivity

9A: WR Political Climate ⇒ (-) ⇒ Procedural Justice
⇒ (-) ⇒ Job Satisfaction
⇑ (-) ⇑
WR Politics Efficacy

9B: PB Political Climate ⇒ (-) ⇒ Procedural Justice
⇒ (-) ⇒ Job Satisfaction
⇑ (-) ⇑
PB Politics Efficacy

10A: WR Political Climate ⇒ (-) ⇒ Procedural Justice
⇒ (-) ⇒ Job Satisfaction
⇑ (-) ⇑
WR Politics Inevitability

10B: PB Political Climate ⇒ (-) ⇒ Procedural Justice
⇒ (-) ⇒ Job Satisfaction
⇑ (-) ⇑
PB Politics Inevitability

Figure 4.1 (continued)

Notational Summary of Hypotheses.

11A: WR Politics Receptivity ⇒ (+) ⇒ WR Politics Use of Tactics

11B: PB Politics Receptivity ⇒ (+) ⇒ PB Politics Use of Tactics

12A: WR Politics Efficacy ⇒ (+) ⇒ WR Politics Use of Tactics

12B: PB Politics Efficacy ⇒ (+) ⇒ PB Politics Use of Tactics

13A: WR Politics Inevitability ⇒ (+) ⇒ WR Politics Use of Tactics

13B: PB Politics Inevitability ⇒ (+) ⇒ PB Politics Use of Tactics

Figure 4.1 (continued)

Notational Summary of Hypotheses.

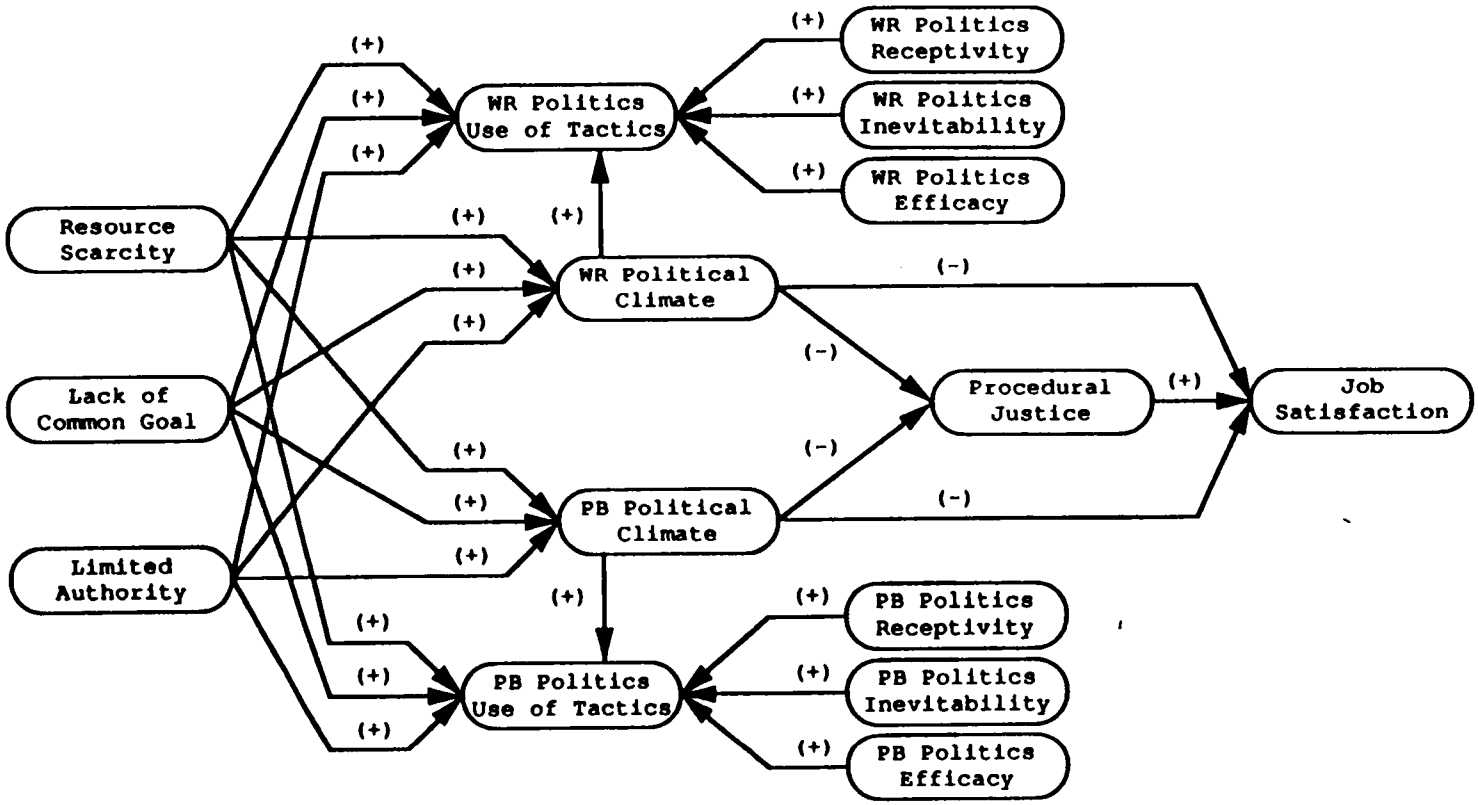


Figure 4.2

Complete Framework of Hypothesized Direct and Indirect Effects.

(WR=Work-Related; PB=Personal Benefits-Oriented)

Descriptive Statistics. The means, standard deviations, internal consistency estimates, and intercorrelations among the study variables are presented in Table 4.4, along with descriptive statistics pertaining to subjects' age, sex, and job tenure. As indicated in Table 4.4, scale means generally ranged in value between 2.0 and 4.0 (all on 5-point scales) and the standard deviations generally were .80 or greater in value. Notable exceptions to this pattern were found for the measures of subjects' reported use of political tactics for work-related ($\underline{M}$=1.85: $\underline{SD}$=.55) and personal benefits-oriented ($\underline{M}$=1.59; $\underline{SD}$=.55) purposes and for job satisfaction ($\underline{M}$=4.21; $\underline{SD}$=.82). The latter results suggested that the distribution of subjects' scores on these variables might be somewhat skewed and/or leptokurtotic. However, examination of the response distributions for the study variables revealed no evidence of excessive skew (values ranging from -1.2 to 1.0) or kurtosis (values ranging from -0.8 to 1.2). Hence, all of these distributions were considered sufficiently normal for subsequent data-analytic purposes.

Inspection of the intercorrelations between the study variables and the demographic characteristics that were considered indicated that age, sex, and job tenure generally had no significant ($p<.05$) bearing on subjects' scores for the primary study variables. Accordingly, the effects of these demographic characteristics were not considered in subsequent analyses.

Table 4.4

Means, Standard Deviations, Alphas, and Intercorrelations Among Study Variables.

#	Variable	Mean	(SD)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1.	Resource Scarcity	2.74	(0.98)	(.74)														
2.	Lack of Common Goal	2.18	(1.09)	.31	(.81)													
3.	Limited Authority	3.08	(1.09)	.50	.32	(.78)												
4.	WRP Climate	3.06	(0.80)	.09	.14	.20	(.89)											
5.	WRP Use of Tactics	1.85	(0.55)	.11	.27	.21	.46	(.81)										
6.	WRP Receptivity	2.85	(0.92)	.01	.12	.03	.30	.36	(.90)									
7.	WRP Inevitability	3.50	(0.83)	.21	.23	.18	.23	.33	.39	(.75)								
8.	WRP Efficacy	2.71	(0.97)	.06	.13	.13	.37	.44	.52	.37	(.82)							
9.	PBP Climate	2.51	(0.97)	.13	.23	.20	.58	.42	.16	.19	.33	(.91)						
10.	PBP Use of Tactics	1.59	(0.55)	.04	.20	.13	.37	.77	.30	.22	.32	.36	(.83)					
11.	PBP Receptivity	2.15	(0.84)	-.06	-.01	.00	.18	.28	.51	.19	.40	.18	.27	(.89)				
12.	PBP Inevitability	3.49	(0.80)	.18	.13	.13	.19	.21	.25	.61	.21	.25	.18	.15	(.71)			
13.	PBP Efficacy	2.45	(0.96)	-.06	.02	.04	.28	.36	.27	.23	.73	.34	.30	.50	.21	(.82)		
14.	Procedural Justice	3.91	(0.93)	-.33	-.48	-.32	-.16	-.16	.03	-.15	-.02	-.29	-.15	-.02	-.17	-.01	(.80)	
15.	Job Satisfaction	4.21	(0.82)	-.25	-.27	-.30	-.08	-.16	-.04	-.10	-.05	-.16	-.23	-.14	-.10	-.05	.49	(.77)
	Age	44.6	(8.50)	-.01	-.10	-.22	-.01	-.10	-.05	-.06	-.07	-.10	-.14	-.06	-.09	-.02	.10	.17
	Sex (1=male 2=female)	1.45	(0.50)	.08	.05	.08	.02	-.08	-.06	-.10	-.10	.06	-.03	-.02	-.04	-.15	-.08	-.02
	Job Tenure	4.50	(4.50)	.06	.01	.01	.05	.04	-.01	.02	-.07	-.00	.01	-.01	.15	-.04	-.06	-.08

Note: WRP=Politics aimed at accomplishing Work-Related objectives. PBP=Politics aimed at obtaining Personal Benefits. N=267. Correlations of r=.12 or greater are significant at p<.05 level (two-tailed). Alphas occupy the diagonal.

Main Effects. As can be seen in Figure 4.3, the zero-order correlations (from Table 4.4) provide initial support for many of the hypotheses involving direct relationships between variables. Two of the three conditions believed to foster greater political activity within organizations, Lack of a Common Goal among employees and Limited Authority for employees to effectively address their concerns, were positively related ($p<.05$) to subjects' reported Use of political influence Tactics for both work-related and personal objectives. Similarly, these two variables were also positively related ($p<.05$) to subjects' perceptions of a more Political Climate associated with attempts to both accomplish work-related objectives and obtain personal benefits. Moreover, for both work-related and personal benefits-oriented politics, subjects' Climate perceptions and their Attitudes (i.e., Receptivity, Inevitability, and Efficacy) were, as expected, all positively related ($p<.05$) to their reported Use of Tactics.

In addition, as hypothesized, subjects' work-related and personal benefits-oriented Political Climate perceptions were both negatively related ($p<.05$) to Procedural Justice, which, in turn, was positively associated with ($p<.05$) Job Satisfaction. Personal benefits-oriented Political Climate was also, as expected, negatively related ($p<.05$) to Job Satisfaction. The hypothesized negative relationship between work-related Climate and Job Satisfaction was not supported.

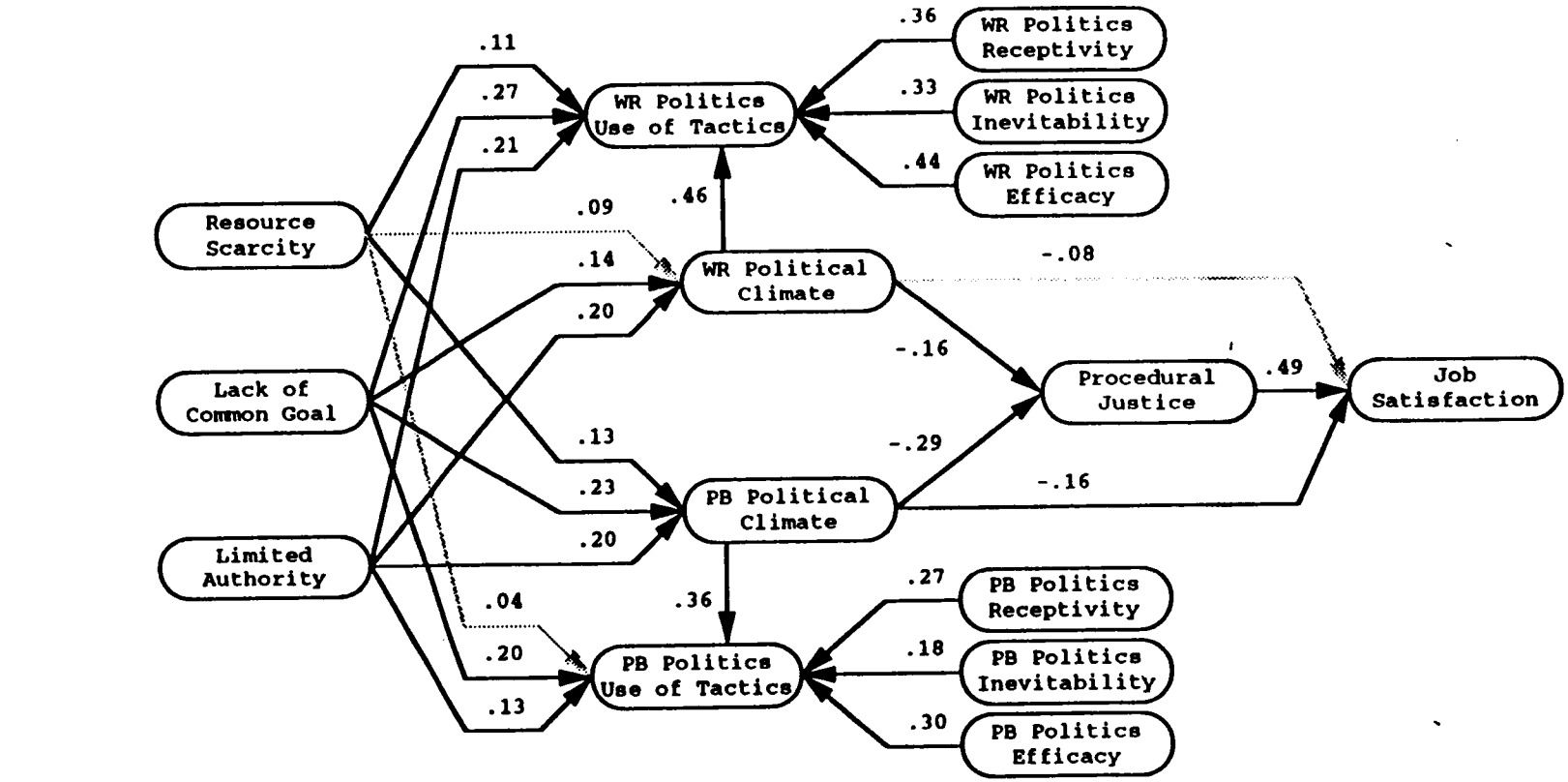


Figure 4.3

Zero-Order Correlations Among Study Variables.

(Transcribed from Table 4.4; For r=.11, p<.05 (one-tailed); For r=.12, p<.05 (two-tailed))

It should also be noted that the results depicted in Figure 4.3 provide only partial support for the hypothesized effects of Resource Scarcity on Political Climate and Use of Tactics. Resource Scarcity was significantly related only to personal benefits-oriented Political Climate ($p<.05$) and to work-related Use of Tactics ($p<.05$). In sum, these obtained correlations provide initial support for Hypotheses 1, 2, 3, 4(B), 11, 12, and 13.

Differential Magnitude of Correlations. In addition to hypothesizing negative effects for work-related and personal benefits-oriented Political Climates on perceptions of Procedural Justice and Job Satisfaction, it was proposed that these effects would differ in magnitude. Specifically, the effects of personal benefits-oriented Political Climate were hypothesized to be stronger than the effects of work-related Political Climate. Accordingly, two T-tests for differences in the magnitudes of these dependent correlations were conducted. For the first of these tests, the correlation between work-related Political Climate and Procedural Justice ($\underline{r}=-.16$) was compared to the correlation between personal benefits-oriented Political Climate and Procedural Justice ($\underline{r}=-.29$). The test revealed a significant difference in the size of these two correlations ($t=2.41$; $p<.01$). The second test compared the correlation between work-related Political Climate and Job Satisfaction ($\underline{r}=-.08$) to the correlation between personal benefits-oriented

Political Climate and Job Satisfaction (r=-.16). This test also revealed a significant difference in the size of these two correlations (t=2.05; p<.05). These results, in support of Hypotheses 5 and 7, suggest that personal benefits-oriented political activity, when recognized by employees, presents a greater source of perceived injustice and job dissatisfaction than does work-related political activity.

Mediated Relationships. Procedural justice was included in this study as a proposed conduit through which employees' perceptions of work-related and personal benefits-oriented political climates might engender lower job satisfaction. Using hierarchical multiple regression techniques, two sets of analyses were conducted to test this general premise. The results of these analyses are presented in Table 4.5.

The first set of analyses examined Procedural Justice as a mediator of the relationship between work-related Political Climate and Job Dissatisfaction. This set of analyses included three steps. First, it was established that work-related Political Climate was significantly and inversely related to Procedural Justice (β=-.16; p<.01). Second, an equation regressing Job Satisfaction on work-related Political Climate indicated a marginally significant inverse relationship between these two variables (β=-.08; p<.06), with work-related Political Climate explaining one percent (R^2=.01) of the variance in Job Satisfaction. In the third step of this analysis, Procedural Justice was added to

Table 4.5

Tests for Procedural Justice as a Mediator.

	Criterion Variables					
	Procedural Justice			Job Satisfaction		
Step / Predictors	β	R^2	ΔR^2	β	R^2	ΔR^2
Work-Related Politics Variables						
1 WRP Climate	-.16**	.03**	.03**			
2 WRP Climate				-.08+	.01+	.01+
3 WRP Climate				.00		
Procedural Justice				.49**	.24**	.23**
Personal Benefits Politics Variables						
1 PBP Climate	-.29**	.08**	.08**			
2 PBP Climate				-.16**	.03**	.03**
3 PBP Climate				-.03		
Procedural Justice				.48**	.24**	.21**

Note: + p<.10; * p<.05; ** p<.01

the regression equation. Procedural Justice explained an additional twenty-three percent (ΔR^2=23; p<.01) of the variance in Job Satisfaction (β=.49; p<.01) and virtually eclipsed the previous link between work-related Political Climate and Job Satisfaction (β=.00; p>.05). These results suggest that perceptions of greater work-related political activity in organizations may be related to decreased job satisfaction among employees by virtue of the sense of unfairness engendered by this type of political activity.

In a similar manner, the second set of analyses focused on Procedural Justice as a mediator of the relationship between personal benefits-oriented Political Climate and Job (Dis)satisfaction. First, a significant inverse relationship between personal benefits-oriented Political Climate and Procedural Justice was established (β=-.29; p<.01). Second, an equation regressing Job Satisfaction on personal benefits-oriented Political Climate indicated a significant inverse relationship between these two variables (β=-.16; p<.01), with the personal benefits-oriented Political Climate accounting for three percent (R^2=.03) of the variance in Job Satisfaction. In the third step of this analysis, Procedural Justice was added to the regression equation. It explained an additional twenty-one percent of the variance (ΔR^2=21; p<.01) in Job Satisfaction (β=.48; p<.01) and produced a substantial decrease in the magnitude of the relationship between personal benefits-oriented

Political Climate and Job Satisfaction (β=-.02; p>.05). These results suggest that the effects of personal benefits-oriented Political Climate on Job (Dis)satisfaction may be mediated largely by the sense of injustice engendered by the perception that political influence is an important factor in obtaining personal benefits. In sum, the results of these analyses provide initial support for Hypotheses 6A and 6B.

Moderated Relationships. Measures of employee attitudes (i.e., Receptivity, Inevitability, and Efficacy) about the use of political influence to accomplish both work-related and personal benefits-oriented objectives were also included in this study. These attitudes were considered not only as potential predictors of employees' use of political tactics but also as potentially important factors governing employee reactions to working in organizations perceived to be highly political in nature. Specifically, it was hypothesized that both work-related and personal benefits-oriented Political Climates would engender stronger perceptions of Procedural Injustice and feelings of Job Dissatisfaction to the extent that employees view political behavior (work-related and/or personal benefits-oriented) as inherently wrong and harmful to organizations (low Receptivity), generally preventable and atypical of most organizations (low Inevitability), and difficult to understand or effectively use (low Efficacy). These hypotheses were tested through twelve hierarchical multiple regression analyses.

Each of these twelve analyses consisted of two steps. In step one, the main effects of both the particular type of Political Climate in question (personal benefits-oriented or work-related) and the associated Attitude on the dependent variable of interest were calculated (e.g., regressing Job Satisfaction on both work-related Political Climate and Receptivity to work-related politics). In step two, the effect of the relevant interaction term (e.g., the product of multiplying work-related political climate scores by receptivity to work-related politics scores) was added to the regression equation to examine whether it explained a significant amount of additional variance (ΔR^2). Significant ΔR^2's were considered indicative of a moderating effect for the attitude in question (cf., Stone & Hollenbeck, 1984).

As shown in Table 4.6, none of the hypotheses germane to the moderating effects of employees' attitudes about the use of work-related politics were supported (Hypotheses 8A, 9A and 10A). By contrast, as shown in Table 4.7, significant ($p<.05$) or marginally significant ($p<.10$) moderating effects were detected in four of the six analyses focusing on views toward personal benefits-oriented politics. The results thus indicate partial support for Hypotheses 8B, 9B, and 10B.

To interpret these latter findings, the beta coefficients obtained in step two of each regression equation were used to plot linear representations of predictor-criterion relationships for both high and low

Table 4.6

Tests of Work-Related Politics Attitudes as Moderators.

	Criterion Variables					
	Procedural Justice			Job Satisfaction		
Step / Predictors	β	R^2	ΔR^2	β	R^2	ΔR^2
Moderating Effects for WRP Receptivity						
1 WRP Climate	-.18**			-.09+		
WRP Receptivity	.10+	.03**		.02	.01	
2 WRP Climate	-.28+			-.14		
WRP Receptivity	-.03			-.04		
Interaction Term	.18	.03**	.00	.09	.01	.00
Moderating Effects for WRP Inevitability						
1 WRP Climate	-.13*			-.08+		
WRP Inevitability	-.11*	.04**		-.07	.01+	
2 WRP Climate	-.33+			.04		
WRP Inevitability	-.29+			.04		
Interaction Term	.30	.04**	.00	-.18	.01	.00
Moderating Effects for WRP Efficacy						
1 WRP Climate	-.18**			-.09+		
WRP Efficacy	.04	.03**		.02	.01	
2 WRP Climate	-.15			-.12		
WRP Efficacy	.09			-.02		
Interaction Term	-.06	.03*	.00	.06	.01	.00

Note: Table reflects six separate regression equations, each consisting of two steps. Main effects were entered at step 1, followed by the introduction of the interaction term at step 2 to examine the magnitude of moderator effects.
+ p<.10; * p<.05; ** p<.01

Table 4.7

Tests of Personal Benefits Politics Attitudes as Moderators.

	Criterion Variables					
	Procedural Justice			Job Satisfaction		
Step / Predictors	β	R^2	ΔR^2	β	R^2	ΔR^2
Moderating Effects for PBP Receptivity						
1 PBP Climate	-.30**			-.17**		
PBP Receptivity	.03	.08**		-.09+	.04**	
2 PBP Climate	-.47**			-.39**		
PBP Receptivity	-.16			-.33*		
Interaction Term	.28+	.09**	.01+	.37*	.05**	.01*
Moderating Effects for PBP Inevitability						
1 PBP Climate	-.27**			-.17**		
PBP Inevitability	-.09+	.10**		-.05	.04**	
2 PBP Climate	-.75**			-.27		
PBP Inevitability	-.36**			-.10		
Interaction Term	.62*	.11**	.01*	.12	.04**	.00
Moderating Effects for PBP Efficacy						
1 PBP Climate	-.32**			-.18**		
PBP Efficacy	.09+	.09**		.01	.03**	
2 PBP Climate	-.38**			-.36**		
PBP Efficacy	.03			-.17		
Interaction Term	.10	.09**	.00	.31+	.04**	.01+

Note: Table reflects six separate regression equations, each consisting of two steps. Main effects were entered at step 1, followed by the introduction of the interaction term at step 2 to examine the magnitude of moderator effects.
+ p<.10; * p<.05; ** p<.01

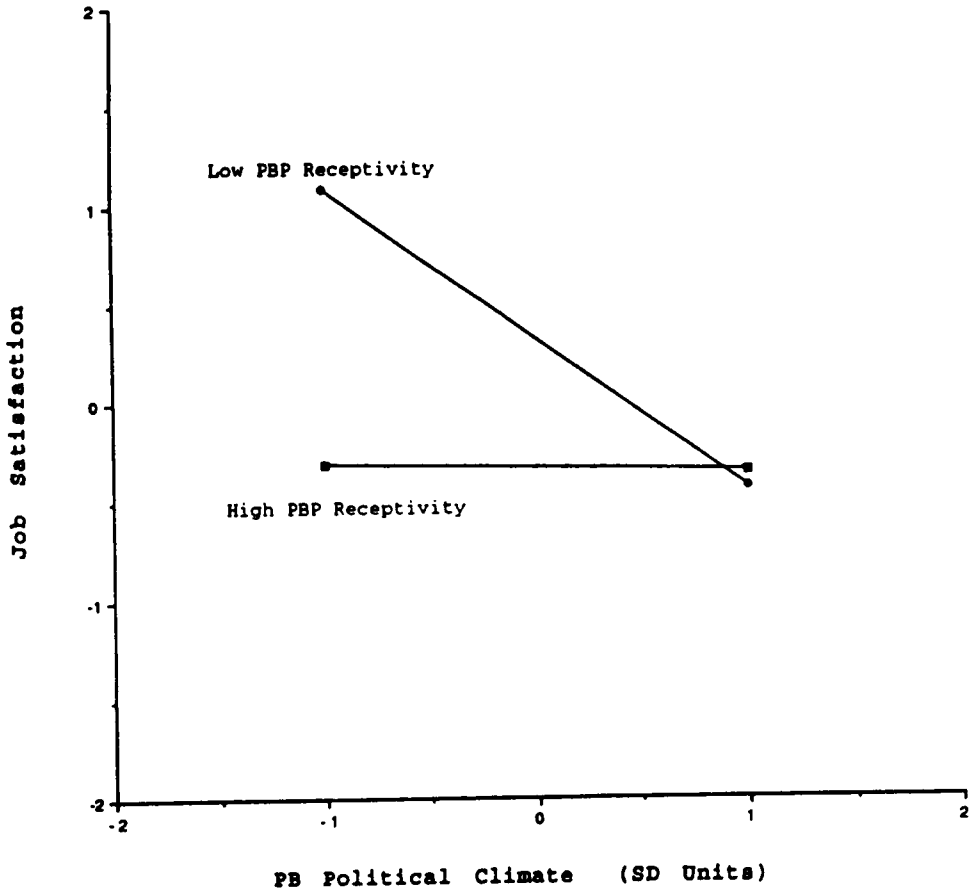


Figure 4.4

Receptivity Toward Personal Benefits-Oriented Politics as a Moderator of the Effect of Political Climate Perceptions on Job Satisfaction.

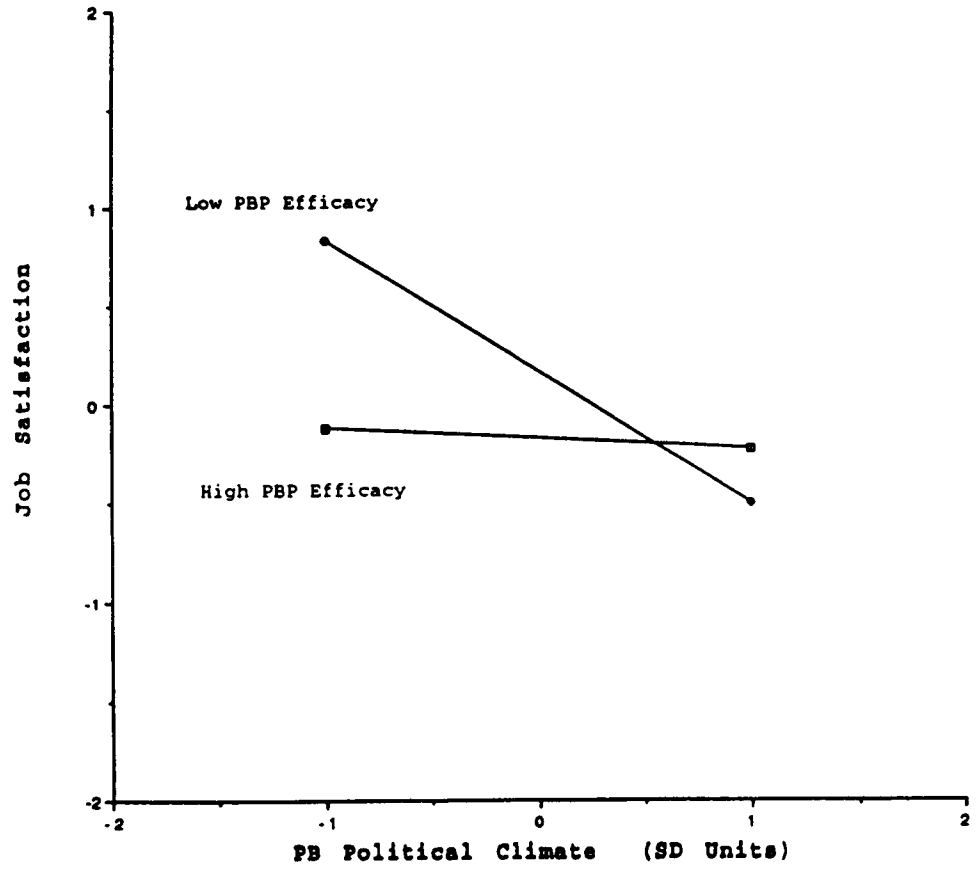


Figure 4.5

Efficacy Regarding Personal Benefits-Oriented Politics as a Moderator of the Effect of Political Climate Perceptions on Job Satisfaction.

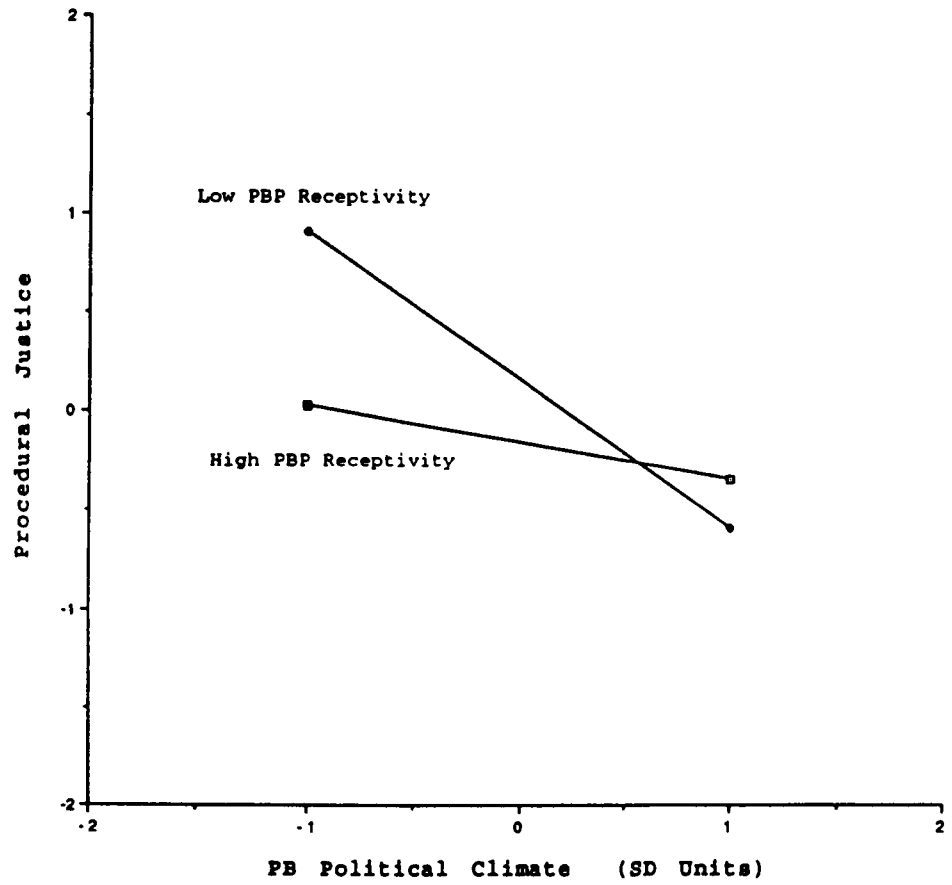


Figure 4.6

Receptivity Toward Personal Benefits-Oriented Politics as a Moderator of the Effect of Political Climate Perceptions on Procedural Justice.

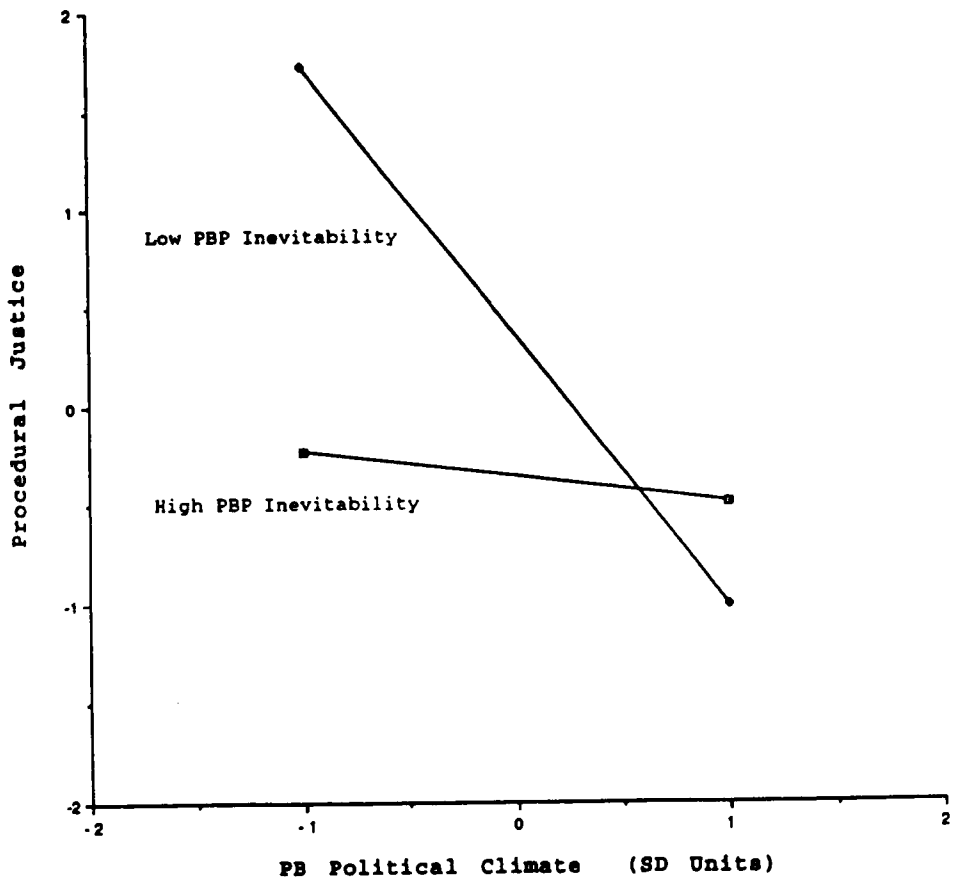


Figure 4.7

Perceived Inevitability of Personal Benefits-Oriented Politics as a Moderator of the Effect of Political Climate Perceptions on Procedural Justice.

levels of the moderator variable in question. These plots, presented in Figures 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, and 4.7, were all indicative of moderator effects consistent with the hypotheses offered in this study. That is, the relationship between personal benefits-oriented Political Climate and Job Satisfaction was more negative for those who believed personal benefits-oriented political activity to be inherently wrong and harmful to organizations (i.e., low Receptivity), as well as for those who reported it difficult for them to understand or effectively use political tactics to obtain personal benefits (i.e., low Efficacy). Similarly, the effect of personal benefits-oriented Political Climate on Procedural Justice was more negative for individuals who believed such activity to be inherently wrong and harmful (i.e., low Receptivity), and for individuals who believed such activity to be generally preventable and atypical of most organizations (i.e, low Inevitability).

In sum, the results from these moderator analyses suggest that the three employee attitudes about work-related politics examined in this research have no bearing on employee reactions to work-related political activity. By contrast, employee attitudes about personal benefits-oriented politics do govern the extent to which this type of politics in organizations ultimately engenders a decreased sense of procedural justice and job satisfaction among employees. In relation to the hypotheses that were examined,

these results do not support Hypotheses 8A, 9A, and 10A, but do offer partial support for Hypotheses 8B, 9B, and 10B.

Concurrent Tests of Hypotheses. Each of the hypotheses that were offered for consideration in this study have, thus far, been tested in relative isolation. Though informative, the results of these analyses present a somewhat limited view of the unique contribution of each study variable within the context of the broader framework of hypothesized relationships. To afford a more complete understanding of this system of proposed relationships, a manifest-variable structural equations analysis was performed (via LISREL VII; Joreskog & Sorbom, 1989) to simultaneously estimate the proposed direct and mediated relationships among the variables of interest. Moderated relationships were not examined in this analysis given the limitations of this data-analytic technique in concurrently estimating the effects of multiple moderated relationships (cf., Jaccard & Wan, 1995).

Presented earlier, Figure 4.2 depicts the complete framework, or model, of hypothesized direct and indirect relationships among the variables that were considered in this study. In testing this model, support for each of the 25 hypothesized links was determined via one-tailed t-tests ($p<.05$) of the standardized path coefficients obtained from the covariance structure analysis. Assessment of the extent to which this model, taken as a whole, reflected an accurate

portrayal of relationships indicated in the observed data was guided by examination of several fit indices, including the GFI, RMSR, CFI, NFI, and PFI. The GFI (Goodness-of-Fit Index) reflects the relative amount of variance and covariance jointly accounted for by a model, and the RMSR (Root-Mean-Square-Residual) reflects the average amount of variance/covariance not accounted for by a model (Joreskog & Sorbom, 1989). The CFI and NFI (Comparative-Fit and Normed-Fit Indices), examine model fit relative to a model which specifies null relationships among the variables (Bentler, 1990). The PFI (Parsimonious-Fit Index) reflects the parsimony of a hypothesized model, relative to a null model (James, Mulaik, & Brett, 1982). For each of these estimates of fit, except RMSR, better overall model fit is suggested by values approaching unity (for RMSR, approaching zero).

Standardized parameter estimates, or path coefficients, obtained via the structural equations analysis are presented in Figure 4.8, with statistically significant relationships ($p<.05$) indicated by bold lines and non-significant paths shaded in gray. As the figure indicates, 14 of the 25 paths were statistically significant when jointly estimated in this analysis, and the signs of all of the significant paths were in the hypothesized direction. T-Values and standard error estimates for this hypothesized structural model are presented in Table 4.8.

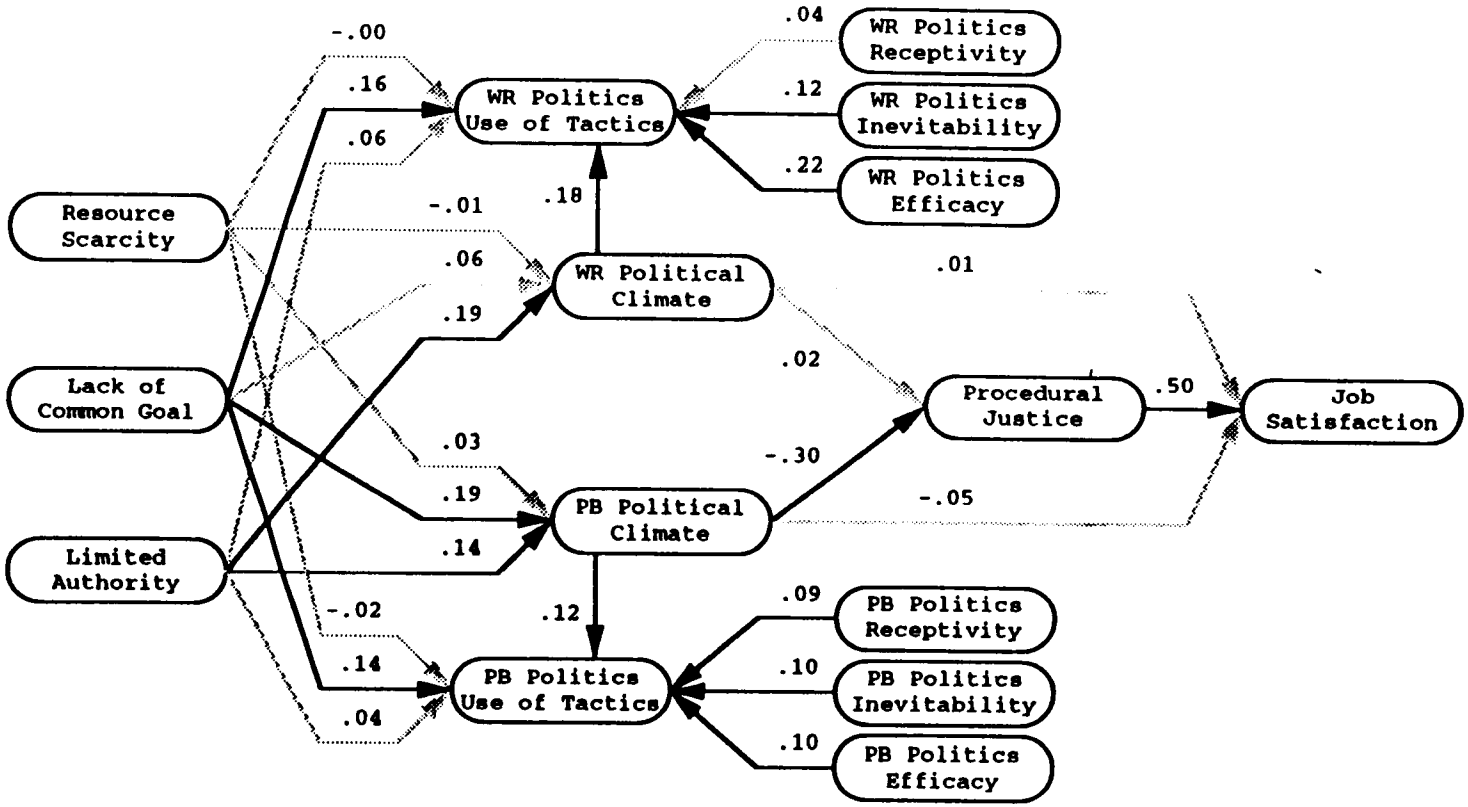


Figure 4.8

Standardized Path Coefficients for the Hypothesized Structural Model.

Table 4.8

T-Values and (Standard Errors) for the Hypothesized Structural Model.

	Criterion Variables					
Predictor Variables	WRP Use of Tactics	PBP Use of Tactics	WRP Climate	PBP Climate	Procedural Justice	Job Satisfaction
Resource Scarcity	-0.03 (0.03)	-0.25 (0.04)	-0.20 (0.06)	0.40 (0.07)		
Lack of Common Goal	2.74 (0.03)	2.24 (0.03)	0.97 (0.05)	3.06 (0.06)		
Limited Authority	0.94 (0.03)	0.57 (0.03)	2.77 (0.05)	2.03 (0.06)		
WRP Climate	4.18 (0.03)				0.21 (0.08)	0.19 (0.07)
WRP Receptivity	0.82 (0.03)					
WRP Inevitability	2.40 (0.03)					
WRP Efficacy	4.23 (0.03)					
PBP Climate		2.68 (0.03)			-4.29 (0.07)	-0.68 (0.06)
PBP Receptivity		1.82 (0.03)				
PBP Inevitability		2.04 (0.03)				
PBP Efficacy		1.88 (0.03)				
Procedural Justice						9.23 (0.05)

Note: WRP=Work-Related Politics. PBP=Personal Benefits-Oriented Politics. N=288. For T-Values greater than 2.36 in absolute value, $p<.01$ (one-tailed). For T-Values greater than 1.66 in absolute value, $p<.05$ (one-tailed). Standard Errors appear in parentheses.

Of the antecedent conditions that were hypothesized to foster increased political activity (Resource Scarcity, Lack of Common Goal, and Limited Authority), only Lack of Common Goal was directly related to the Use of political Tactics to accomplish work-related objectives (.16) and to obtain personal benefits (.14). Limited Authority, by contrast, was only indirectly related to Use of Tactics by virtue of the significant relationships between Limited Authority and both work-related (.19) and personal benefits-oriented (.14) Political Climates, which, in turn, were related to the Use of Tactics to accomplish work-related objectives (.18) and to obtain personal benefits (.12). In a similar fashion, Lack of Common Goal was indirectly related to the Use of Tactics for personal benefits via a significant link with personal benefits-oriented Political Climate (.19). Resource Scarcity was neither directly nor indirectly related to subjects' Use of Tactics to accomplish work-related or personal benefits-oriented objectives.

In addition to the variables noted above, subjects' attitudes (Receptivity, Inevitability, and Efficacy) about the use of politics for work-related and personal benefits-oriented purposes were hypothesized to predict reported use of the respective political influence tactics. With regard to personal benefits, Receptivity (.09), Inevitability (.10) and Efficacy (.10), all were significantly related to the Use of Tactics ($p<.05$). However, with regard to the work-

related aspect of organizational politics, only two of these three attitudinal factors, Inevitability (.12) and Efficacy (.22), were significantly related to the Use of Tactics.

The final portion of the framework depicted in Figure 4.8 examines subjects' responses to perceptions of Political Climates surrounding the accomplishment of work-related objectives and the receipt of personal benefits in their organizations. As was hypothesized, the results indicated a significant negative link between personal benefits-oriented Political Climate and Procedural Justice (-.30), which, in turn, was positively related to reported Job Satisfaction (.50). The direct path from personal benefits-oriented Political Climate to Job Satisfaction was non-significant as were the paths from work-related Political Climate to both Procedural Justice and Job Satisfaction. These results suggest that the negative effects of a personal benefits-oriented Political Climate on Job Satisfaction are largely mediated by heightened perceptions of Procedural Injustice and are considerably stronger than effects associated with a work-related Political Climate.

The overall model had an acceptable, though imperfect, fit to the data, with a GFI of .907 (RMSR=.095), a CFI of .878, an NFI of .860, and a PFI of .401. The relatively low PFI is understandable, given the number of relationships estimated in the model. These indices were calculated based on the χ^2 value for the estimated model ((χ^2 (42_{df})=238.20,

$p<.01$)) and an equivalent 15-variable model specifying null relationships among the constructs ((χ^2 (90_{df})=1700.23, $p<.01$)). The total coefficient of determination for the proposed model was .31. This model allowed for residual covariance links between both Use of Tactics variables (.59, $p<.05$) and both Political Climate variables (.53, $p<.05$). As shown in Table 4.8, the standard errors associated with each of the estimated paths were generally below .07 in value.

In general, the results from the structural equations analysis suggested that the proposed model fit the data well and in a manner consistent with the majority of hypotheses offered for consideration. That is, Hypotheses 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B, 4B, 5, 6B, 7, 11B, 12A, 12B, 13A, and 13B were all at least partially supported by these results.

However, as depicted in Figure 4.8, the proposed framework specifies only indirect links from the conditions of Resource Scarcity, Lack of a Common Goal, and Limited Authority to perceptions of Procedural Injustice (via Political Climates), which may underestimate the effects of these conditions on employees' perceptions of Procedural Justice and, consequently, result in biased estimates of the relationships between Political Climates and Procedural Justice. In order to control for this possibility, a revised version of the proposed model, specifying direct paths from Resource Scarcity, Lack of a Common Goal, and Limited Authority to Procedural Justice, was also tested.

For comparative purposes, fit indices for both the proposed and the revised structural models are presented in Table 4.9. As shown in the table, a chi-square comparison ($\Delta\chi^2$=85.94, $p<.05$) of the two models indicated that the revised model fit the observed data significantly better than the proposed model, with a GFI of .935 (RMSR=.071), CFI of .930, NFI of .910, and PFI of .395.

The standardized path coefficients for the revised model are presented in Figure 4.9. The associated T-Values and standard error estimates are presented in Table 4.10. As shown in Figure 4.9, the path coefficients for the revised model indicated that all three of the additional paths from Resource Scarcity (-.11), Lack of a Common Goal (-.40), and Limited Authority (-.12) to Procedural Justice were significant ($p<.05$) and in an expected direction. That is, all three of these factors were uniquely associated with stronger perceptions of Procedural Injustice. Moreover, when these additional paths were considered, the size of the relationship between personal benefits-oriented Political Climate and Procedural Justice, though still statistically significant and in the hypothesized direction, decreased from -.30, as obtained in the test of the proposed model, to -.16. This change suggests that the results obtained for the originally proposed model may have overestimated the unique role of personal benefits-oriented Political Climate in fostering a sense of Procedural Injustice among employees.

Table 4.9

Fit Indices for Proposed and Revised Structural Models.

	χ^2	df	GFI	rmsr	CFI	NFI	PFI
Proposed Model (Figure 4.7)	238.20*	42	.907	.095	.878	.860	.401
Revised Model (Figure 4.8)	152.26*	39	.935	.071	.930	.910	.395
χ^2 Difference	85.94*	3					

Note: GFI=goodness-of-fit index; rmsr=root-mean-square residual; CFI=comparative fit index; NFI=normed fit index; PFI=parsimonious fit index. The CFI, NFI, and PFI values were derived relative to a null, 15-factor model specifying null relationships among the constructs: χ^2 at 90 degrees of freedom = 1700.23. N=288. * p<.01.

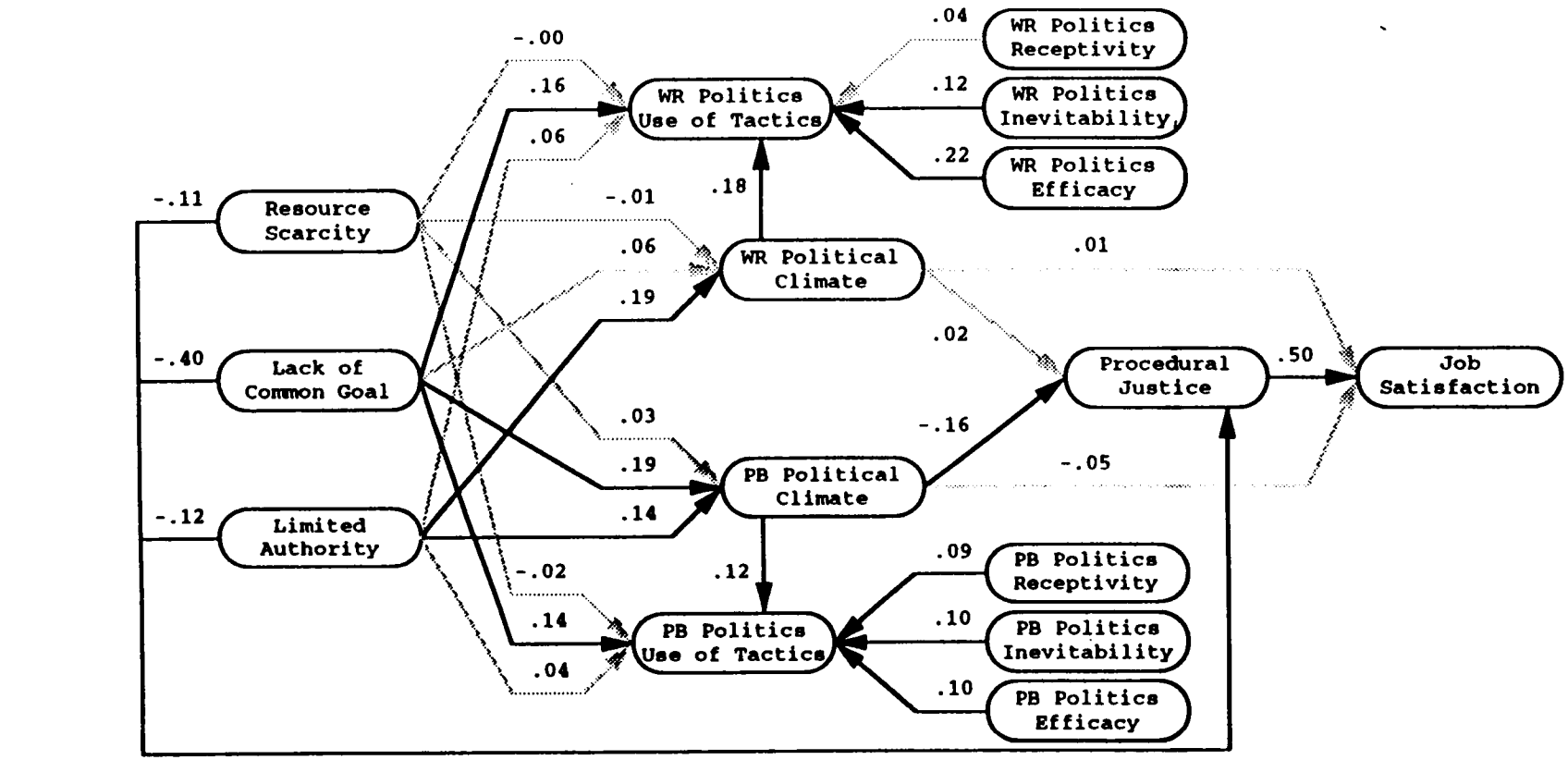


Figure 4.9

Standardized Path Coefficients for the Revised Structural Model.

Table 4.10

T-Values and (Standard Errors) for the Revised Structural Model.

	Criterion Variables					
Predictor Variables	WRP Use of Tactics	PBP Use of Tactics	WRP Climate	PBP Climate	Procedural Justice	Job Satisfaction
Resource Scarcity	-0.03 (0.03)	-0.25 (0.04)	-0.20 (0.06)	0.40 (0.07)	-1.95 (0.05)	
Lack of Common Goal	2.74 (0.03)	2.24 (0.03)	0.97 (0.05)	3.06 (0.06)	-7.21 (0.05)	
Limited Authority	0.94 (0.03)	0.57 (0.03)	2.77 (0.05)	2.03 (0.06)	-1.97 (0.05)	
WRP Climate	4.18 (0.03)				0.31 (0.07)	0.19 (0.07)
WRP Receptivity	0.82 (0.03)					
WRP Inevitability	2.40 (0.03)					
WRP Efficacy	4.23 (0.03)					
PBP Climate		2.68 (0.03)			-2.62 (0.06)	-0.68 (0.06)
PBP Receptivity		1.82 (0.03)				
PBP Inevitability		2.04 (0.03)				
PBP Efficacy		1.88 (0.03)				
Procedural Justice						9.23 (0.05)

Note: WRP=Work-Related Politics. PBP=Personal Benefits-Oriented Politics. N=288. For T-Values greater than 2.36 in absolute value, $p<.01$ (one-tailed). For T-Values greater than 1.66 in absolute value, $p<.05$ (one-tailed). Standard Errors appear in parentheses.

Aside from the marked difference in estimates obtained for this path, the remaining path estimates obtained for the revised model were highly similar to those obtained for the original model in their signs, magnitudes, significance, and associated standard error estimates (for comparison, see Figure 4.8 vs. Figure 4.9 and Table 4.8 vs. Table 4.10). The total coefficient of determination for the revised model was .46. As did the originally proposed model, the revised model allowed for residual covariance links between both Use of Tactics variables (.59, $p<.05$) and both Political Climate variables (.53, $p<.05$).

In essence, the results of these structural equations analyses offer support for many of the hypotheses that were considered in this study and, compared to results from the regression analyses that were reported above, afford a more complete understanding of the unique contributions of each study variable within the broader framework of proposed relationships. Of the organizational conditions believed to foster increased Use of political influence Tactics, only one, Lack of a Common Goal, was directly related to Use of Tactics. By contrast, Limited Authority was only indirectly related to the Use of Tactics, by virtue of its effects on Political Climate. Resource Scarcity was neither directly nor indirectly related to Use of Tactics. The findings also indicated that, for the personal benefits-oriented Use of Tactics, attitudes concerning Receptivity, Inevitability,

and Efficacy were each significant predictors. However, of these three attitudes, only two, Inevitability and Efficacy, were significant predictors of the Use of Tactics for work-related purposes.

The results also suggested that a personal benefits-oriented Political Climate engenders lower Job Satisfaction for employees by virtue of the sense of Procedural Injustice that they ascribe to such activity. Work-related Political Climate, by contrast, was not uniquely related to either Procedural Justice or Job Satisfaction. Finally, results from the analysis of the revised structural model indicated that the three conditions that were hypothesized to foster political activity in organizations (Resource Scarcity, Lack of a Common Goal, and Limited Authority) may also create a sense of Procedural Injustice among employees beyond that which can be attributed to the Political Climate that such conditions may stimulate.

Supplemental Analyses

In this study, subjects' reported use of political influence tactics for work-related and personal benefits-oriented purposes was assessed via two parallel measures. Each of these measures was comprised of ten items reflecting five qualitatively different upward influence tactics that have been generally considered to be "political" means of influence (cf., Porter, Allen, & Angle, 1981). Specifically, these two measures were based on scales developed by Kipnis,

Schmidt, and Wilkinson (1980) and refined by Schriesheim and Hinkin (1990) to assess the use of Ingratiation, Exchange, Coalitions, Upward Appeals, and Assertiveness. Hence, it is not surprising that, when submitted to factor analysis, the items comprising these two measures demonstrated a tendency to cluster in factors germane to specific tactics, rather than specific reasons for using the different tactics (refer to Table 4.3). In light of these findings and in recognition of the possibility that subjects' decisions to use different types of political influence tactics might be related to different constellations of predictor variables, a separate set of additional analyses was conducted to examine tactic-specific relationships with the various predictor variables considered in this study.

For these analyses, both of the measures of subjects' reported use of political influence tactics were separated into five two-item subscales in accordance with the items designed to assess each of the five different tactics. This resulted in ten new tactic-specific measures, five germane to work-related objectives and five associated with attempts to obtain personal benefits. The descriptive statistics for these new variables, in addition to their intercorrelations and correlations with the other variables considered in this study are presented in Table 4.11. As shown in this table, the intercorrelations among the tactics were all significant ($p<.05$) and positive. Inspection of the scale means revealed

Table 4.11

Intercorrelations Among Tactics and Other Study Variables.

#	Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.	WRP Ingratiation	(.77)									
2.	WRP Exchange	.60	(.76)								
3.	WRP Coalitions	.40	.40	(.71)							
4.	WRP Upward Appeal	.21	.21	.39	(.84)						
5.	WRP Assertiveness	.22	.21	.27	.38	(.59)					
6.	PBP Ingratiation	.78	.55	.35	.23	.24	(.82)				
7.	PBP Exchange	.45	.75	.36	.21	.26	.53	(.85)			
8.	PBP Coalitions	.34	.42	.56	.27	.19	.41	.54	(.82)		
9.	PBP Upward Appeal	.23	.21	.25	.61	.30	.31	.25	.41	(.82)	
10.	PBP Assertiveness	.12	.17	.16	.30	.60	.18	.29	.33	.44	(.65)
	Scale Mean	2.45	1.64	2.15	1.32	1.61	2.25	1.47	1.62	1.25	1.26
	Standard Deviation	1.11	0.80	0.86	0.54	0.67	1.20	0.74	0.82	0.51	0.54
	Correlations with Other Study Variables										
	Resource Scarcity	.11	.03	.05	.13	.14	.05	.05	.04	.05	.06
	Lack of Common Goal	.16	.10	.14	.23	.27	.11	.11	.10	.17	.21
	Limited Authority	.13	.05	.11	.20	.17	.09	.07	.06	.11	.12
	WRP Climate	.36	.37	.33	.19	.17	.39	.26	.23	.18	.11
	WRP Use of Tactics	.79	.75	.73	.55	.54	.68	.61	.53	.42	.35
	WRP Receptivity	.40	.37	.13	.12	.14	.33	.31	.14	.16	.08
	WRP Inevitability	.30	.32	.22	.14	.12	.22	.25	.15	.07	.10
	WRP Efficacy	.41	.38	.28	.17	.19	.32	.25	.21	.17	.11
	PBP Climate	.35	.35	.24	.20	.21	.38	.23	.19	.19	.18
	PBP Use of Tactics	.63	.64	.50	.41	.41	.79	.61	.77	.60	.54
	PBP Receptivity	.31	.35	.11	.06	.03	.29	.29	.13	.12	.04
	PBP Inevitability	.24	.23	.06	.03	.04	.23	.19	.06	.02	.09
	PBP Efficacy	.32	.36	.22	.11	.16	.29	.25	.19	.15	.12
	Procedural Justice	-.10	-.09	-.08	-.13	-.16	-.10	-.09	-.10	-.15	-.16
	Job Satisfaction	-.14	-.11	.00	-.11	-.22	-.16	-.20	-.12	-.21	-.18

Note: WRP=Work-Related Politics. PBP=Personal Benefits Politics. N=288; $p<.05$ for $r>.12$ (two-tailed). Scale alphas occupy the diagonal.

Ingratiation to be the most commonly used tactic, followed by Coalition formation, Exchange, Assertiveness, and Upward Appeal, though the scale means for each of these tactics were generally low (ranging from 2.45 to 1.25). In addition, each of these tactics was positively correlated with all of the predictor variables that were considered in this study.

To more closely examine tactic-specific relationships with the predictor variables, ten regression analyses were performed. Scores on the different tactics were assigned as the dependent variables in the equations, and the proposed predictors (i.e., Resource Scarcity, Lack of a Common Goal, Limited Authority, Political Climate, Efficacy, Receptivity, and Inevitability) were entered together as the independent variables. The results of these analyses are presented in Table 4.12, with results related to subjects' use of work-related political influence tactics presented in the upper portion and results related to the use of political tactics to obtain personal benefits reported in the lower portion of this table.

Interestingly, the patterns of findings for both the work-related and personal benefits-oriented tactics were highly similar, with the most notable exception being that Efficacy was generally more predictive of subjects' use of work-related tactics. Otherwise, with regard to both work-related and personal benefits-oriented politics, Political Climate was generally predictive of subjects' use of each of

Table 4.12

Regression Results for Predictors of Each Particular Tactic.

	Beta Weights for Criterion Tactics				
Predictors	ING	EXC	COA	UPW	ASS
Work-Related Politics Variables					
Resource Scarcity	.02	-.03	-.04	.01	.04
Lack of Common Goal	.05	.01	.05	.16**	.22**
Limited Authority	.04	-.02	.03	.11*	.05
WRP Climate	.20**	.23**	.24**	.10+	.08+
WRP Receptivity	.21**	.17**	-.06	.04	.06
WRP Inevitability	.07	.14**	.11*	.02	-.03
WRP Efficacy	.20**	.16**	.18**	.08	.10+
R^2	.27**	.25**	.15**	.10**	.11**
Personal Benefits Politics Variables					
Resource Scarcity	-.01	.00	.01	-.01	-.03
Lack of Common Goal	.02	.06	.05	.13*	.17**
Limited Authority	.01	.00	.01	.05	.05
PBP Climate	.28**	.13*	.12*	.12*	.09+
PBP Receptivity	.19**	.21**	.05	.08	-.02
PBP Inevitability	.11*	.09+	-.01	-.07	.04
PBP Efficacy	.07	.08	.13*	.08	.08
R^2	.21**	.13**	.06**	.07**	.07**

Note: ING=Ingratiation; EXC=Exchange; COA=Coalitions; UPW=Upward Appeal; ASS=Assertiveness. + p<.10; * p<.05; ** p<.01

the five tactics considered. By contrast, Lack of a Common Goal, was a significant predictor of subjects' use of only two of the five tactics, Upward Appeal and Assertiveness. Moreover, the Attitudes about politics (i.e., Receptivity, Inevitability, and Efficacy) were generally more predictive of subjects' reported use of the three tactics Ingratiation, Exchange, and Coalition formation. Resource Scarcity and Limited Authority were generally not significantly related to the use of any of the five tactics.

In sum, these supplemental findings suggest that, aside from the effects of Political Climate (which was generally predictive of the use of each of the different tactics that were considered), different types of variables tend to be more predictive of employees' use of different types of tactics. The situational characteristic, Lack of a Common Goal, was more predictive of the more aggressive, or "hard" (cf., Kipnis & Schmidt, 1985), tactics involving Upward Appeals and Assertiveness. By contrast, the dispositional factors (i.e., Receptivity, Efficacy, and Inevitability) tended to be more strongly associated with subjects' use of the less aggressive, "soft" tactics involving the use of Ingratiation, Exchange-offering, and Coalition-formation. The findings also suggest that employees' sense of political skill, or Efficacy, may be a more salient predictor of their use of political tactics to accomplish work-related, rather than personal benefits-oriented, objectives.

Summary of Findings

This research employed a variety of analyses to test the hypotheses and examine additional relationships germane to the hypotheses. Of these analyses, the most comprehensive and rigorous were the structural equations analyses, which simultaneously examined each of the hypothesized direct and indirect relationships among the study variables. These analyses afford an understanding of the unique contribution of each study variable within the broader system of proposed relationships. Hence, the results from these analyses, as depicted in Figure 4.9, served as the criteria by which support or lack of support was determined for most of the research hypotheses. Support for the hypotheses involving moderated relationships was determined based on results from the hierarchical multiple regression analyses (see Tables 4.6 and 4.7). A summary of the results from these analyses is presented in Table 4.13. This table contains a review of each of the hypotheses that were offered for consideration, coupled with an indication of the level of support that was obtained for them in this study.

In general, the research findings portray a system of relationships in which employees' who feel that they and their colleagues lack sufficient authority to address their concerns are more likely to perceive higher levels of political climates involving attempts to accomplish work-related objectives and to obtain personal benefits.

Table 4.13

Summary of Support for Hypotheses.

Hypotheses	Level of Support
1A: Resource Scarcity ⇒ Lack of Common Goal ⇒ (+) ⇒ WR Politics Limited Authority ⇒ Use of Tactics	Partially Supported **Yes**:Lack Common Goal Limited Authority **No**: Resource Scarcity
1B: Resource Scarcity ⇒ Lack of Common Goal ⇒ (+) ⇒ PB Politics Limited Authority ⇒ Use of Tactics	Partially Supported **Yes**:Lack Common Goal Limited Authority **No**: Resource Scarcity
2A: Resource Scarcity ⇒ Lack of Common Goal ⇒ (+) ⇒ WR Political Limited Authority ⇒ Climate	Partially Supported **Yes**:Limited Authority **No**: Resource Scarcity Lack Common Goal
2B: Resource Scarcity ⇒ Lack of Common Goal ⇒ (+) ⇒ PB Political Limited Authority ⇒ Climate	Partially Supported **Yes**:Lack Common Goal Limited Authority **No**: Resource Scarcity
3A: WR Political Climate ⇒ (+) ⇒ WR Politics Use of Tactics	Supported
3B: PB Political Climate ⇒ (+) ⇒ PB Politics Use of Tactics	Supported

Table 4.13

Summary of Support for Hypotheses (continued).

Hypotheses	Level of Support
4A: WR Political Climate ⇒ (-) ⇒ Job Satisfaction	Not Supported
4B: PB Political Climate ⇒ (-) ⇒ Job Satisfaction	Supported Via the mediation of Procedural Injustice
5: Magnitude of Relationship 4B (>) Magnitude of Relationship 4A	Supported Via the mediation of Procedural Injustice
6A: WR Political Climate ⇒ (-) ⇒ Procedural Justice ⇒ (+) ⇒ Job Sat.	Not Supported
6B: PB Political Climate ⇒ (-) ⇒ Procedural Justice ⇒ (+) ⇒ Job Sat.	Supported
7: Magnitude of Relationship 6B (>) Magnitude of Relationship 6A	Supported

Table 4.13

Summary of Support for Hypotheses (continued).

Hypotheses	Level of Support
8A: WR Political Climate ⇒ (-) ⇒ Procedural Justice ⇒ (-) ⇒ Job Satisfaction ⇑ (-) ⇑ WR Politics Receptivity	Not Supported
8B: PB Political Climate ⇒ (-) ⇒ Procedural Justice ⇒ (-) ⇒ Job Satisfaction ⇑ (-) ⇑ PB Politics Receptivity	Partially Supported **Yes:** Dissatisfaction (at $p<.05$) Injustice (at $p<.10$)
9A: WR Political Climate ⇒ (-) ⇒ Procedural Justice ⇒ (-) ⇒ Job Satisfaction ⇑ (-) ⇑ WR Politics Efficacy	Not Supported
9B: PB Political Climate ⇒ (-) ⇒ Procedural Justice ⇒ (-) ⇒ Job Satisfaction ⇑ (-) ⇑ PB Politics Efficacy	Partially Supported **Yes:** Dissatisfaction (at $p<.10$) **No:** Injustice
10A: WR Political Climate ⇒ (-) ⇒ Procedural Justice ⇒ (-) ⇒ Job Satisfaction ⇑ (-) ⇑ WR Politics Inevitability	Not Supported
10B: PB Political Climate ⇒ (-) ⇒ Procedural Justice ⇒ (-) ⇒ Job Satisfaction ⇑ (-) ⇑ PB Politics Inevitability	Partially Supported **Yes:** Injustice (at $p<.10$) **No:** Dissatisfaction

Table 4.13

Summary of Support for Hypotheses (continued).

Hypotheses	Level of Support
11A: WR Politics Receptivity ⇒ (+) ⇒ WR Politics Use of Tactics	Not Supported
11B: PB Politics Receptivity ⇒ (+) ⇒ PB Politics Use of Tactics	Supported
12A: WR Politics Efficacy ⇒ (+) ⇒ WR Politics Use of Tactics	Supported
12B: PB Politics Efficacy ⇒ (+) ⇒ PB Politics Use of Tactics	Supported
13A: WR Politics Inevitability ⇒ (+) ⇒ WR Politics Use of Tactics	Supported
13B: PB Politics Inevitability ⇒ (+) ⇒ PB Politics Use of Tactics	Supported

Moreover, the results suggest that a personal benefits-oriented climate is likely to be stronger when a unifying goal or sense of direction is lacking among members of the organization.

With regard to the potential effects of these two types of political climate, the findings indicated that both may foster greater use of various political influence tactics by employees. However, only one of these two facets of an organization's political climate, the activity surrounding employees' efforts to obtain personal benefits, appears to have a significant negative bearing on employees' sense of procedural justice and, consequently, their reported level of job satisfaction. The results further suggest that these adverse consequences associated with a personal benefits-oriented political climate may be somewhat stronger among employees who hold the attitudes that this type of political behavior is inherently wrong and harmful to organizations, an atypical occurrence in most organizations, and difficult for them to understand or effectively use.

The same attitudes, or the converse thereof, were also demonstrated to be predictive of employees' reported use of political tactics. Specifically, the results suggest that employees are more likely to engage in the use of ostensibly political "upward influence" tactics to accomplish their work-related objectives to the extent that they believe such behavior to be a common and unavoidable fact of life in most

organizations and that they have an understanding of and the skill to effectively deal with the work-related political aspects of an organization. The findings also indicate that employees' perceptions of certain situational factors may contribute to their use of political tactics to accomplish their work-related objectives. Employees were more likely to use such tactics to the extent that they perceived a lack of a common goal or a unifying sense of direction among members of their organization, a lack of sufficient authority for them and their colleagues to effectively address their concerns, and a more political climate surrounding activity in their organization.

A similar constellation of personal and situational factors also contributed to employees' reported use of political influence tactics for personal benefits. However, in addition to the factors noted above, the findings indicated that employees who were less likely to view the use of political tactics to obtain personal benefits as inherently wrong and harmful to organizations were more likely to engage in the use of such tactics.

Results from the supplemental analyses helped to clarify the specific types of political influence tactics that these personal and situational factors were likely to promote among employees in this study. With regard to the use of political tactics for both work-related and personal benefits-oriented objectives, political climate was related

to employees' reported use of each of the five tactics that were assessed: ingratiation, exchange, coalition formation, upward appeal, and assertiveness. However, attitudes about organizational politics were generally more predictive of the use of only three of these five tactics: ingratiation, exchange, and coalitions. By contrast, the situational factor, lack of a common goal, was more predictive of the remaining tactics: upward appeal and assertiveness. It would thus appear that, while employees' attitudes about politics may be predictive of their use of relatively "soft" tactics, certain situational circumstances may be likely to promote an increased use of the more aggressive, or "hard", tactics by organizational members.

In sum, the results of this study were supportive of most of the hypotheses that were considered. Implications of these findings are discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The research reported in this paper was conducted based on the premise that political activity is an inherent aspect of organizational life with which managers and employees are confronted on a fairly regular basis. Support for this basic premise derives not only from casual anecdotes but also from compelling theoretical arguments and empirical studies (cf., Cyert & March, 1963; Ferris, et al., 1989, 1992, 1993, 1994; Gandz & Murray, 1980; Madison et al., 1980; Mintzberg, 1983; Pfeffer, 1981, 1992). Despite the prevalence of this unique form of organizational behavior, however, research aimed at developing a more informed understanding of organizational politics has been limited. Results from several studies have indicated that political activity in organizations presents a significant source of job dissatisfaction among employees, which, in turn, may present a number of serious problems for organizations (cf., Ferris, et al., 1992, 1993, 1994; Gandz & Murray, 1980; Roznowski & Hulin, 1992). Yet, the results of these prior studies offer only minimal insight as to the situational and dispositional factors that foster political behavior in organizations, why the experience of workplace politics it is dissatisfying to employees, and whether these antecedents and outcomes might differ depending on the type of political behavior in question. The present research was conducted to explore these issues and produced a number of

interesting findings which afford a better understanding of organizational politics and, consequently, hold implications for the effective management of political activity and its effects on the well-being of organizational members.

This research was firmly grounded in the notion that it might be beneficial to conceptualize organizational politics as a multi-faceted phenomenon which can be differentiated in terms of whether it is aimed at accomplishing work-related objectives or obtaining strictly personal benefits. Similar distinctions have been previously discussed in the politics literature (cf., Mayes & Allen, 1977; Porter et al., 1981; Schein, 1977) and implied by prior research findings (Kipnis et al., 1980). Such a distinction is also fundamental to the assertions of some authors that, although political activity may result in a number of adverse consequences for employees and organizations, "it is probably effective that managers do behave as politicians [and] it is even better that some of them are quite good at it" (Pfeffer, 1981, p.370, 1992). A major objective of this study was to evaluate the merits of maintaining such a distinction between work-related and personal benefits-oriented political activity via empirical comparison of select antecedents and consequences of these two previously unexplored facets of organizational politics.

Effects of Political Climates

More specifically, it was proposed that distinguishing between work-related and personal benefits-oriented goals of

political activity would enable the identification of which aspects of an organization's political climate are primarily responsible for, or associated with, decreased satisfaction among employees. The results of this study indicated that as hypothesized, the adverse reactions associated with personal benefits-oriented political climates were stronger than the reactions associated with work-related political climates. Indeed, when the effects of both of these facets of politics were jointly considered, personal benefits-oriented climate was significantly related to decreased job satisfaction (via lowered perceptions of procedural justice), but work-related political climate was essentially unrelated to satisfaction. These findings suggest that there is considerable merit to maintaining a distinction between work-related and personal benefits-oriented political behavior. Moreover, the results also suggest that, while employees may attribute a degree of legitimacy to the use of political means to accomplish work-related objectives, they perceive personal benefits-oriented activity as a breach of procedural justice in organizations and, consequently, are inclined to be more dissatisfied when confronted with high levels of political activity aimed at obtaining personal benefits such as pay raises, promotions, and good performance ratings.

In addition to being perhaps the first study to examine these dual facets of organizational politics, this was also perhaps the first study to examine procedural justice as a

potentially important mediating variable in the relationship between political climate perceptions and job satisfaction. As described above, the results supported the hypothesized mediating role of procedural injustice as a conduit through which personal benefits-oriented political climate engenders job dissatisfaction. Moreover, the results from the revised structural equations analyses showed that this relationship was fully mediated by procedural justice. This particular finding is intriguing in light of the fact that traditional models (e.g., Ferris et al., 1989) do not include procedural justice as a mediating variable. Rather, such models might portray job anxiety or stress (cf., Matteson & Ivancevich) as potentially important mediators of this relationship. The results of this study do not discount the role of stress as a potentially important mediating variable. However, they do suggest that stress might be more appropriately invoked as a mediator of the relationship between procedural justice and job satisfaction, rather than as separate path through which political climate perceptions lead to dissatisfaction.

This study's results regarding the effects of political climate on procedural justice and, in turn, job satisfaction are also of interest when compared to the results reported in prior studies. Several previous studies have examined the relationship between organizational politics perceptions and job satisfaction, reporting correlations ranging from $r=-.21$ to $r=-.60$ (Ferris et al., 1992, 1993, 1994; Gandz & Murray,

1980). In this study, the correlations between work related (r=-.08) and personal benefits-oriented (r=-.16) political climates and job satisfaction were both smaller than those obtained in prior research. Moreover, the results from the structural equations analysis indicated that, by virtue of the effects of procedural justice on job satisfaction (.50) and personal benefits-oriented political climate perceptions on procedural justice (-.16), the unique effects of personal benefits-oriented political climate explained less than 1% of the variance in job satisfaction (R^2=(.50 X .16)^2=.0064). This effect size is considerably smaller than the 4% to 36% range of effect sizes reported in prior studies and is also much smaller than the combined effects of Resource Scarcity, Lack of a Common Goal, and Limited Authority on Satisfaction as observed in the present study (R^2=.10).

There are at least two plausible explanations for these disparities, both of which would appear to have merit. One explanation is that previous studies have overestimated the role of organizational politics as a unique source of job dissatisfaction by failing to jointly examine additional sources of dissatisfaction and/or by employing overly broad measures of political climate that may overlap with similar constructs (e.g., procedural justice). Another explanation is that, given the present study's focus on separate facets of organizational politics, it employed measures which were overly conservative and reflected but a narrow portion of

the political climate construct. As stated, both of these explanations have merit, and truth probably lies somewhere between the two. Perhaps the most prudent implication to be drawn from these findings is that if a manager is seeking ways to promote increased job satisfaction among employees, he or she should direct attention toward maintaining a sense of equity (i.e., justice) among employees with respect to all organizational affairs, rather than focusing exclusively on eradicating politics from his or her organization.

Moderating Effects of Attitudes

The preceding discussion and the theoretical foundation of this study's hypotheses pertaining to differential, main, and mediated effects for work-related vs. personal benefits-oriented political climates operate on the premise that, in general, evaluations of and reactions to political activity in organizations will be similar across employees. Another objective of this study, however, was to ascertain whether such reactions to both work-related and personal benefits-oriented political climates might be governed by differences in individual attitudes regarding each of these broad types of political behavior in organizations. More specifically, it was hypothesized that highly political climates would engender stronger perceptions of injustice and feelings of dissatisfaction among individuals to the extent that they considered the type of political activity in question to be inherently wrong and harmful to organizations (i.e., low

Receptivity), generally preventable and atypical of most organizations (i.e., low Inevitability), and difficult for them to understand, control, or effectively use (i.e., low Efficacy).

The results indicated that the hypotheses regarding employees' attitudes as moderators of their reactions to work-related politics were not supported. However, four of the six hypotheses pertaining to personal benefits-oriented political activity were marginally supported. Employees with low political Efficacy and/or low political Receptivity were more likely to report lower job satisfaction in the face of highly political climates. Similarly, employees with either low Inevitability or low Receptivity scores in more highly political climates were apt to perceive their organizations as less procedurally just and, consequently, report lower job satisfaction.

By virtue of the fact that the moderating effects of these attitudes were only observed for personal benefits-oriented political climate, these findings reinforce the importance of maintaining a distinction between work-related and personal benefits-oriented political activity. Moreover, the results show that employees differ in their likelihood of experiencing adverse reactions when exposed to personal benefits-oriented political activity in organizations. In effect, the findings suggest that such a political climate is of only minor concern to individuals who view politics as

an organizational reality with which they can contend and as a reality which may, at times, be justified. By contrast, it appears that the people most likely to be adversely affected by personal benefits-oriented political climates are those who view such activity an inherently harmful organizational aberration with which they cannot cope.

Interestingly, the former view and associated results are consistent with, and thus contribute to the validity of, contemporary perspectives on organizational politics (e.g., Pfeffer, 1992). According to such perspectives, the latter view is naive and less efficacious. These results are also consistent with extant theory (Ferris et al., 1989) and research findings (Ferris et al., 1994) which imply that a sense of control and understanding of one's general work environment serves to diminish adverse reactions to the experience of workplace politics. It would thus seem that a variety of dispositional factors affect individual reactions to political activity in organizations. However, given that the magnitudes of the moderator effects reported in this study were rather small (R^2=.01), perhaps due to limitations associated with using regression to test for interactions (cf., McClelland & Judd, 1993), the relative importance of such attitudinal factors remains an empirical question.

Attitudes as Predictors of Tactic Usage

From a practical standpoint, the preceding discussion and associated findings suggest that in order to ameliorate

any adverse reactions employees have to personal benefits-oriented political climates, a manager might encourage his or her employees to develop a more politically astute and adroit mien. However, in so doing, such a manager should recognize that he or she may be inadvertently fostering an increased use of political influence tactics by his or her subordinates. To clarify, the results of the present study indicated that the same attitudes which served to diminish adverse employee reactions to organizational politics were also significantly related to employees' use of political influence tactics to obtain strictly personal benefits and to accomplish their work-related objectives. Specifically, the subjects in this study reported a more frequent use of ingratiation, exchange, and coalition-oriented influence tactics with their supervisors to the extent that they also held attitudes reflecting political Receptivity, Efficacy, and Inevitability. Collectively, these findings are quite consistent with the theoretical framework advanced by Ferris et al. (1989) and suggest that the political attitudes that were considered in this study may effectively differentiate, if not predict, who is likely to "play the political game", rather than resent it and, consequently, be less satisfied working in a highly political organization.

Situational Antecedents of Tactic Usage

In addition to examining the role of employee attitudes as potentially important factors bearing on people's use of

political influence tactics, this study was also the first to concurrently examine, in a field setting, the effects of several theoretically important situational determinants of political activity in organizations. These factors included Resource Scarcity, Lack of a Common Goal, Limited Authority, and the Political Climate surrounding the accomplishment of work-related objectives and the receipt of strictly personal benefits. In general, the findings regarding the effects of these variables on employees' Use of Tactics for both work-related and personal benefits-oriented objectives were quite similar. This similarity could indicate that the merit of maintaining a distinction between work-related and personal benefits-oriented politics lies mainly in understanding the consequences, rather than the antecedents, of organizational politics. It should be noted, however, that situational antecedents specific to each of these types of political activity (e.g., unrealistic work procedures vs. vague promotion criteria) were not considered in this study.

Of the situational factors that were considered, both Political Climate and Lack of a Common Goal among employees (i.e., lack of an understanding of the organization's mission, strategy, and goals) were directly related to employees' use of political tactics. Limited Authority (i.e., bureaucratic "red" tape) was also indirectly related to the use of political tactics via Political Climate. The effects due to Political Climate suggest that employees are

more likely to engage in politics to the extent that they perceive it as common practice, if not a norm, in their organization. These effects were also independent of those attributable to individuals' attitudes about politics. This suggests that a strong climate might promote the use of political tactics by even those people who are opposed to and less skilled at using such tactics. Hence, these results suggest that organizational politics may be, to some extent, a self-perpetuating phenomenon. Of course, more rigorous research examining these effects over time would be needed to provide an adequate test of the validity of this notion. Nevertheless, these findings are consistent with accepted models of organizational politics (Ferris et al., 1989) and extend previous findings as to the effects of climate on employees' use of political influence tactics (Cheng, 1983).

As noted above, both Lack of a Common Goal and Limited Authority were either directly or indirectly associated with employees' reported use of political tactics. These effects are consistent with the notion that organizational politics are the result of conflict and uncertainty (cf., Kreitner & Kinicki, 1992). More directly, these results lend support to Pfeffer's (1981) model, which holds that employees will be more likely to resort to political means to pursue their own individual goals when organizational goals, standards, and procedures are either unclear or unacceptable to employees. In essence, these results suggest that employees, regardless

of their individual attitudes about the use of politics, may resort to the use of politics, or work "outside the system", to correct for perceived inadequacies in an organization's formally established management systems. Similar findings were reported in a study by Rush and Schoel (1995), who examined employees' use of political tactics in response to systemic limitations to their capacity to work effectively.

It is also interesting to note that examination of the particular types of tactics used by employees revealed differences in those related to personal attitudes and those related to situational variables. Political climate was generally related to employees' use of all of the tactics that were considered. Employee attitudes about politics, however, were generally only predictive of their use of the "softer" tactics (cf., Kipnis & Schmidt, 1985) involving ingratiation, exchange, and coalition formation. The situational variable, Lack of a Common Goal, by contrast, was more strongly related to the use of "hard" tactics involving upward appeal and assertiveness. These findings suggest that "strong situations" are apt to elicit more aggressive political reactions as employees attempt to either remove or breach the obstacles or uncertainty imposed by perceived situational constraints.

While these findings are by no means conclusive as to whether the use of political tactics is a viable means of effectively redressing perceived inadequacies in management

systems, they do offer practical implications for managers interested in reducing the amount of political activity in their organizations. At the most basic level, these results suggest that managers might soften the political climate in their organization by eliminating employees' perceived need to use political means to accomplish their objectives. More directly, managers might ensure that goals and standards are not only clear but also endorsed, if not simply accepted, by their employees. Further, the results suggest that managers should ensure that their employees have enough latitude to effectively execute their job-related responsibilities and address their personal needs. Such notions are endemic to a "Total Quality" management philosophy (cf., Bounds, Dobbins, & Fowler, 1995) and fundamental to the idea of "Empowering" employees. In fact, viewed in light of such contemporary and popular perspectives, the results reported here imply that, if not empowered by virtue of their organizations' policies, employees may very well resort to the use of politics as a means of "self-empowerment".

Resource Scarcity was also a hypothesized situational antecedent of employees' use of political tactics. However, when jointly considered with the effects of Lack of a Common Goal, Limited Authority, Political Climate, and the various Attitudes about politics, Resource Scarcity was not uniquely related to employees' Use of Tactics for either work-related or personal benefits-oriented objectives. Perhaps, the most

direct interpretation of this finding is that, contrary to the convincing theoretical arguments that have been offered regarding the causes organizational politics (cf, Mintzberg, 1983; Pfeffer, 1981), resource scarcity in organizations is, in a relative sense, not an important trigger of political behavior.

Contributions

With the noted exception of the hypotheses pertaining to the effects of Resource Scarcity, most of the hypotheses offered for consideration in this study were supported and thus contribute to more informed understanding of a topic about which relatively little is known. The research that is reported herein reflects the first attempt to empirically assess dual facets of organizational politics and their differential effects on employee job satisfaction. This was also the first study to consider and examine the role of procedural justice and employee attitudes about politics as important factors bearing on their reactions to politics in the workplace. Similarly, this research was the first to examine the effect of such attitudes, as well as the effects of political climate and a variety of additional situational factors, on employees' reported use of political influence tactics in an organizational setting. Moreover, tests via structural equations analyses enabled a determination of the unique contribution of each of these study variables within the broader system of proposed relationships. The analyses

yielded a variety of interesting findings which afford a better understanding of organizational politics as well as potential antecedents and consequences of this activity. As in all research, however, interpretation of these findings should be tempered by an understanding of the potential limitations to their generalizability.

Limitations

One potential limitation to the generalizabiltiy of the results of this study derives from the fact that this study was based on data obtained from public-sector organizations. More specifically, the sample consisted of state government managers and their colleagues who worked for typical state agencies such as the departments of Commerce, Corrections, Human Services, and Finance. Given the types of problems more often ascribed to public, rather than private-sector, organizations (e.g., budgetary cutbacks, tight controls and too many levels of authorization, often vague and disputed goals; cf., Nutt & Backoff, 1993), one might expect issues such as Resource Scarcity, Lack of Common Goals, and Limited Authority to be especially salient for respondents in this study. Moreover, there may be little that even upper-level managers in these organizations can do to acquire additional resources from a state legislature or to change regulations that impose limits to employees' authority to effectively perform their jobs. Consequently, employees in public-sector organizations might be less inclined to try to politically

influence their managers to change a situation over which their managers have little control. The results of this study, to some extent, support this notion in that neither Resource Scarcity nor Limited Authority were directly related to subjects' use of tactics. Hence, one might expect a different pattern of relationships concerning these situational antecedents of organizational politics to be obtained from a study based on data collected from a private-sector sample. While such public vs. private-sector distinctions may be relatively less important for the remainder of relationships that were examined in this study, a replication of these findings in a private-sector setting would add further credibility to the pattern of results and, in turn, a better understanding of organizational politics.

Another potential limitation of this research concerns the fact that all of the variables considered in this study were assessed via subjects' self-reports and tested at the individual-level of analysis. These methodological features were necessary to adequately examine individual perceptions of, reactions to, and attitudes about the political aspects of their work environment. Moreover, individual subjects are arguably in the best position to report the frequency with which they engage in political influence behavior, which may not always be visible or discernable to other organizational members. Nevertheless, as is always a possibility with self-report data, and perhaps moreso when examining potentially

sensitive topics such as how often one engages in political activity, some subjects may have been inclined to provide unconsciously biased or intentionally distorted information.

Assuring the confidentiality of subjects' responses may have provided some protection against intentional distortion of data. However, bias may still be present in the data. The generally low means for subjects reported frequency of using political tactics might appear to support such a conclusion. Alternatively, these low values could reflect the fact that organizational politics is a type of behavior that has a low base-rate when examined at the individual level of analysis. In accordance with the higher mean values that were observed for the Political Climate ratings, the base-rate of politics would be expected to increase when the behavior of multiple actors is considered. Whether these values reflect bias or reality remains an empirical question. Future research might enable partial resolution of this issue by attempting to replicate these findings under more controlled conditions or by using peers', supervisors', or trained observers' ratings of individuals' use of tactics, the political climate(s) of an organization, and situational antecedents of politics.

By utilizing ratings from multiple sources and/or from objective indicators of variables such as resource scarcity (e.g., budgetary figures), lack of common objectives (e.g., public mission statements), and limited authority (e.g., job descriptions), future research might also guard against the

possibility of method-bias (common method variance), which may have influenced the results of the present study. More specifically, this issue concerns the possibility that, by virtue of the fact that the variables considered in this study were all assessed in one survey, observed relations among these variables might reflect some shared variance due to similarities in the methods by which they were assessed (e.g., scale formats), rather than due to "true" covariation between the underlying constructs.

Although this issue of common method variance may pose less of a threat than previously thought (cf., Bagossi & Yi, 1990; Crampton & Wagner, 1994; Spector, 1987), the present study did attempt to minimize effects due to method bias by positioning the measures of interest in different locations throughout the survey and using different response formats to assess different variables. Moreover, the results of the study were not indicative of effects due to common method bias in that many of the variables assessed using the same response format were essentially unrelated (as indicated by the correlations reported in Table 4.4).

As noted, this study employed individual-level analyses appropriate to a focus on individuals' reactions to <u>their perceptions</u> of the political climate(s) of an organization and how personal attitudes about politics might influence these reactions. It is possible that these perceptions may not necessarily reflect reality with respect to the actual

amount of political activity that occurs in an organization or the organizational conditions which promote it. As was suggested earlier, future research concerned with the more objective, rather than perceptual, effects of these factors on individuals' use of political tactics and/or feelings of job satisfaction might employ more objective indicators of these conditions. A somewhat less objective approach that might also prove informative would be to use group-level aggregates of individuals' subjective evaluations of their working environment, thereby reducing the effects of any one persons' perceptual idiosyncrasies. These aggregate scores could then be reassigned to group members for analysis in relation to other individual-level variables such as job satisfaction (cf., Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Rousseau, 1985).

Another potential limitation that should be considered in interpreting these findings is the cross-sectional nature of the data. Because all of the data gathered for this study was obtained at one point in time and none of the variables were manipulated, any inferences of causal relations among these variables would not be justified based solely on the results of this study. As such, these results might best be viewed as providing only tentative support for the implied causal processes underlying the hypothesized relationships. Given that the variables that were considered in this study would not be amenable to experimental manipulation in field settings, future research studies aimed at examining causal

relations among them might have to sacrifice a degree of the psychological fidelity afforded by field settings in favor of more tightly controlled experimental designs. A somewhat less rigorous, though potentially informative, alternative would be to examine the effects of these variables over an extended period of time in an organizational setting. This would contribute to a better understanding of issues related to the "self-perpetuating" or cyclical nature of political activity in organizations (e.g., Political Climate fosters an increased Use of Tactics, which strengthens the Climate).

A final issue that should be considered in interpreting the results of this study concerns the scope of the measures that were used to assess aspects of organizational politics. A major research objective was to effectively differentiate between work-related and personal benefits-oriented aspects of political activity in organizations. Consequently, the scales used to measure these dual facets of attitudes about politics, political climate, and, to a lesser extent, use of political tactics were primarily focused on the work-related vs. personal benefits-oriented goals of political activity. Hence, these measures were rather conservative in the degree to which they reflect the wide variety of ways in which such political activity may be manifested in organizations. It is therefore possible that the results of this study represent a somewhat conservative estimate of the effects likely to be engendered by the full range of activities that might fall

within the realm of what is generally considered "political" behavior in organizations.

For example, as reflected to some extent by the results obtained in prior studies using the Kacmar and Ferris (1991) "Perceptions of Organizational Politics Scale" (cf., Ferris et al., 1992, 1993, 1994), one might expect individuals to have more adverse reactions in the face political climates characterized by favoritism, hidden agendas, back-stabbing, discriminatory practices, falsification of information, and character assassination - a sample of the "darker side" of politics. Moreover, such dubious, if not clearly unethical, practices might be expected to elicit equally strong adverse reactions among employees regardless of whether the intended goals of such activity are illegitimate (i.e., for strictly personal benefits) or legitimate (i.e, accomplishing work-related objectives). In effect, the results of the present study could be broadly interpreted as suggesting that, in terms of employee reactions to work-related vs. personal benefits-oriented politics, "the ends may somewhat justify the means". At which point the ends will no longer justify the means in the eyes of employees remains an interesting empirical question which could be addressed by considering a broader array of both political tactics and political goals.

Future Research

The preceding discussion of potential limitations to the generalizability of this study's findings suggests many

directions for future research that would help clarify and augment the results reported herein. Though it may not be feasible to control for all of these potential limitations in one study, future research should, at a minimum, attempt to replicate the findings of this study. Beyond the scope of this study, lie many avenues for research aimed at gaining a better understanding of political activity in organizations. Two of these avenues, which stem from notions suggested in the present study, are discussed below.

One potentially informative avenue for future research centers on the relationship between organizational politics and employee job satisfaction. This relationship has been examined in several prior studies, which have consistently revealed an inverse relationship between political climate ratings and job satisfaction (Gandz & Murray, 1980; Ferris et al., 1992, 1993, 1994). This negative relationship is of some concern, given the fact that low job satisfaction not only is inherently undesirable from an employee standpoint but also is apt to pose a number of serious problems from an organizational standpoint. For example, it has been noted that employees' adaptive responses to dissatisfaction may include efforts to reduce work-role inclusion (e.g., via absenteeism or turnover), reduce job inputs (e.g., steal), and/or change the work-situation (e.g., unionization; cf., Roznowski & Hulin, 1992). Hence, job satisfaction should be

considered an important criterion variable in the politics research.

However, based on the tenets of Equity Theory (Adams, 1965), which many authors have used to delineate ways in which organizational members may respond to the perceived inequity associated with job dissatisfaction (cf., Fisher & Locke, 1992; Hirschman, 1970; Roznowski & Hulin, 1992), it seems reasonable to suspect that political activity may be not only a cause but also a consequence of dissatisfaction. More specifically, as implied in the previous discussion of employees' use of political tactics as a means of removing or circumventing perceived situational constraints such as limited authority, employees may see the use of political influence tactics as a primary vehicle for removing sources of dissatisfaction with their jobs and their broader working environment. For example, an employee who is dissatisfied with his or her job due to the workload it involves might, if more legitimate approaches fail, attempt to change his or her job situation via using political influence to obtain additional help in completing the work (i.e. work-related politics). Alternatively, he or she may engage in the use of political influence tactics in an effort to receive better pay or get a better job assignment (i.e., personal benefits-oriented politics).

A recent study by Rush and Schoel (1995) was the first to directly examine this notion of (work-related) political

activity as an employee response, rather than as a climate-oriented antecedent, to job dissatisfaction. The results of their study supported this perspective. In addition, their findings indicated that employee job involvement moderated the relationship between job dissatisfaction and employees' use of various political influence tactics such that more highly involved employees were likely to engage in the use of more aggressive political influence tactics in response to job dissatisfaction. The findings were interpreted as suggesting that the more committed organizational members may be the ones who are less likely to leave a dissatisfying job situation and, instead, try to improve it via the use of aggressive political influence.

Although testing this notion was beyond the intended scope of the present study, the results that were obtained in this study also offer tentative support for the idea that dissatisfaction may be an important element in understanding both the consequences and the causes of political behavior in organizations. Specifically, the correlations between job satisfaction and the use of tactics for both work-related (r=-.16) and personal benefits-oriented (r=-.23) objectives were significant ($p<.01$) and negative, as would be expected based on the view of dissatisfaction as a cause of political behavior. These somewhat serendipitous findings by no means provide conclusive evidence of the unique or causal bearing of job dissatisfaction as a stimulus of political behavior.

However, they do indicate that there may be some merit to further consideration of this general premise. If supported, this idea would add a new and potentially useful dimension for understanding and, in turn, managing the political side of organizations. Future research should pursue this issue.

Another important avenue for future research stems more directly from this study's distinction between work-related and personal benefits-oriented facets of political activity. The results of this study indicated that, relative to the effects of employees' perceptions of the political climate surrounding efforts to obtain strictly personal benefits, the effects of a work-related political climate on employee job satisfaction were negligible. Thus, it would appear that work-related aspects of political activity in organizations may not ultimately lead to the adverse consequences noted earlier as potential employee responses to dissatisfaction. Presuming that this hypothesis can withstand more rigorous empirical scrutiny, it leads to a more intriguing question: Might employees' use of political influence tactics to help them accomplish their work-related objectives actually be a beneficial force in organizations?

By definition, political behavior aimed at obtaining strictly personal benefits, or achieving "non-sanctioned", "illegitimate" goals which are not congruent with the goals of an organization (cf., Mayes & Allen, 1977; Schein, 1977), would be expected to have a harmful impact on organizational

effectiveness. By contrast, the use of political influence to accomplish work-related, "sanctioned", or "legitimate" objectives that are congruent with an organization's goals would appear to have potential for helping an organization fulfill its mission. As noted previously, this latter view, though it represents a complete contradiction of traditional notions of organizational politics, is entirely consistent with the idea that "it is probably effective that managers behave as politicians [and] it is even better that some of them are quite good at it" (Pfeffer, 1981, p. 370). As yet, however, there is no empirical basis to support this claim.

If supported, this perspective could elevate the topic of organizational politics from its current status of simply another source of job dissatisfaction and a means by which some organizational members obtain more than their "fair" share of rewards to a more prominent issue in the study of management. A particularly intriguing implication of this "helpful politician" perspective, when combined with the aforementioned notion of political activity as an adaptive response to dissatisfaction, is that political activity in organizations may serve as a self-correcting mechanism by which employees, through unofficial channels, bridge the gaps in the formally specified organizational policies and management structures. Ironically, from this perspective, the traditionally pejorative term "Organizational Politics"

begins to look like an alternative form of Organizational Citizenship (cf., Organ, 1988).

Clearly, these ideas conflict with more traditional views concerning organizational politics, and there is no empirical foundation upon which they can be justified. In addition, these notions concern only one facet of politics, which some authors might argue is not "political" at all, because it is not purely self-serving and may not threaten the self-interests of others (e.g., Porter et al., 1981). Moreover, even if such well-intentioned political activity is demonstrated to be prevalent in organizations, whether or not it would result in beneficial outcomes might depend on at least two additional considerations - both concerning the abilities of the political actor. First, the actor's goals must be not merely well-intentioned, but correct. In other words, a skilled politician with bad ideas is likely to do more harm than good, regardless of his or her intentions. Second, the actor must be a skilled politician who is able to diplomatically influence others, preferably in a way that protects his or her capacity for future influence.

This discussion concerning the potentially beneficial effects of political activity has been based on a series of nested assumptions, all of which rest on how the construct of organizational politics is specified, and none of which have been tested in previous studies. Hence, this is one area in which future research on organizational politics

could potentially produce some very interesting findings. At a minimum, the question of whether work-related political activity in organizations does indeed have any beneficial effects on employee or work-unit performance needs to be addressed.

Concluding Remarks

"Organizational Politics" is an elusive construct to define. Despite widespread recognition that politics is an organizational reality, there is a clear lack of unanimity among scholars as to exactly what constitutes this class of organizational behavior and what the dimensions are by which this behavior is to be defined. The results of the present study point to the potential importance of considering the multifaceted nature of this construct in both a taxonomic and a phenomenological sense, raising questions regarding the extent to which some aspects of this activity may indeed serve a beneficial role for not only employees but also the organizations they serve. As such, the present study offers a foundation upon which to build a better understanding of a previously overlooked, but potentially intriguing, side of organizational politics.

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APPENDIX

APPENNDIX A

PILOT STUDY

Before proceeding with the main study, a pilot study was conducted to examine the psychometric properties of the measures to be used in this research. Following the same procedures outlined for the main study, data for the pilot study was obtained from a sample similar to, but smaller than (N=180) the sample used for the main study. Based on the results of the pilot study, which are reported below, this pilot data was incorportated with additional data to test the research hypotheses in the main study. A comparison of scale means for the data that was obtained for the pilot study and the additional data that was obtained to conduct the main study suggested that, in general, there were no significant differences between these two sources of data, with respect to subjects' scores on the variables that were considered (F=1.65; df=15,272; p>.05).

Pilot Study Results

Evaluation of the psychometric quality of the measures to be used in this study began with factor analyses of the items comprising each measure. For each of these analyses, factors were extracted using Principal Components techniques and rotated orthogonally using Varimax rotation techniques as programmed in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. Separate factor analyses were conducted for five different groupings of items comprising the measures of

interest. For each analyses, items which did not load on their respective a-priori factors with values of .50 or greater or loaded on more than one factor with values of .40 or greater were omitted from subsequent analyses.

The first factor analysis focused on items involving subjects' interpretations and evaluations of their general working environment. Items comprising measures of Resource Scarcity, Lack of a Common Goal, Limited Authority, Perceptions of Politics for both Work-Related Objectives and Personal Benefits, Procedural Justice, and General Job Satisfaction were included in this analysis for a total of 22 items from 7 different measures. A seven factor solution accounted for 76.8% of the variance in the data with six of the seven factors having eigenvalues grater than one and the seventh factor having an eigenvalue of .84. Although these results suggest that a six-factor solution might provide a better fit to the data, the seven-factor solution was more consistent with the a-priori specification of measures. Examinination of the rotated factor loadings (presented in Table A.1) revealed that all but two items grouped cleanly (according to the criteria set forth above) into their respective factors. Accordingly, these two items, one pertaining to resource scarcity and one focusing on perceptions of politics surrounding work-related goals, were omitted from further analysis.

TABLE A.1

ROTATED FACTOR LOADINGS FOR ITEMS COMPRISING MEASURES OF RESOURCE SCARCITY, LACK OF A COMMON GOAL, LIMITED AUTHORITY, POLITICAL CLIMATE PERCEPTIONS (WORK-RELATED AND PERSONAL), PROCEDURAL JUSTICE AND JOB SATISFACTION

	Factor Loadings						
Item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
PCPB3	.88						
PCPB2	.84						
PCPB1	.82						
PCPB4	.76						
PCWR3		.86					
PCWR2		.85					
PCWR1		.79					
PCWR4	.51	.67					
LCO1			.89				
LCO2			.83				
LCO3			.68				
LA2				.84			
LA1				.76			
LA3				.64			
PJ1					.84		
PJ2					.71		
PJ3					.68		
RS3						.84	
RS2						.80	
RS1				.45		.58	
JS2							.88
JS1							.85

Factor loadings less than .40 have been omitted. PCPB=Political Climate re Personal Benefits; PCWR=Political Climate re Work-Related Objectives; LCO=Lack of Common Objectives; LA=Limited Authority; PJ=Procedural Justice; RS=Resource Scarcity; JS=Job Satisfaction.

As they generally confirmed the independence of data pertaining to each of the seven scales that were considered, these results suggest that there is merit to maintaining a distinction between political activity that is intended to accomplish work-related objectives and political activity intended to obtain personal benefits. Hence, the measures pertaining to individual beliefs and attitudes regarding each of these types of political activity were analyzed via two separate factor analyses - the first examining items pertaining to the use of politics to accomplish work-related objectives and the second examining items regarding the use of politics to obtain personal benefits. Both of these measures contained 16 items comprising four subscales which focused on the extent to which subjects believed political activity: a) to be inherently wrong, b) to be have a harmful impact on organizations, c) to be generally uncommon and preventable, and d) to be difficult for them to understand or use effectively.

Results from the factor analysis of items pertaining to subjects' beliefs regarding the use of political influence to accomplish work-related objectives revealed that a three-factor solution provided the best fit to the data. Together, these factors, each of which had an eigenvalue grater than 1.3, accounted for 61% of the variance in the data. As might have been anticipated, the items designed to assess views regarding the extent to which politics is inherently wrong

and items designed to assess views regarding the extent to which politics has a harmful impact on organizations merged into one factor (see rotated factor loadings in Table A.2). Otherwise, with the exception of one item pertaining to subjects' beliefs regarding their ability to understand and use political methods, the remaining items grouped cleanly into their respective factors.

A similar pattern of results was obtained from the factor analysis of items pertaining to subjects' views about the use of politics to obtain personal benefits. A three-factor solution, accounting for 62% of the variance in the data, was revealed as the optimal solution. Again, items designed to assess views regarding the extent to which politics is wrong and items designed to assess views regarding the extent to which politics has a harmful impact on organizations merged into one factor (see Table A.3). Otherwise, all but two items, one pertaining to the harmful impact of politics and the other pertaining to individuals' capability of understanding and using political methods, grouped into their respective factors.

While the results of these two factor analyses do not support the a-priori four-factor structure that was built into the two measures of views concerning political activity aimed at accomplishing work-related objectives and political acitivity aimed at obtaining personal benefits, the three-factor solutions that emerged presents no real threat to the

TABLE A.2

ROTATED FACTOR LOADINGS FOR ITEMS COMPRISING MEASURES PERTAINING TO INDIVIDUAL BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES REGARDING THE USE OF POLITICS TO ACCOMPLISH WORK-RELATED OBJECTIVES

	Factor Loadings		
Item	1	2	3
WRONG1	.68		
WRONG2	.65		
WRONG3	.76		
WRONG4	.83		
HARMFUL1	.74		
HARMFUL2	.66		
HARMFUL3	.76		
HARMFUL4	.81		
EFFICACY1		.75	
EFFICACY2		.82	
EFFICACY3	-.41	.73	
EFFICACY4		.78	
INEVITABLE1			.59
INEVITABLE2			.71
INEVITABLE3			.73
INEVITABLE4			.70

Factor loadings less than .40 have been omitted. EFFICACY items scored to reflect individuals' beliefs that they can understand and effectively use political methods of influence. Other items scored to reflect beliefs that organziational politics is wrong, harmful to organizations, and inevitable.

TABLE A.3

ROTATED FACTOR LOADINGS FOR ITEMS COMPRISING MEASURES PERTAINING TO INDIVIDUAL BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES REGARDING THE USE OF POLITICS TO OBTAIN PERSONAL BENEFITS

	Factor Loadings		
Item	1	2	3
WRONG1	.70		
WRONG2	.85		
WRONG3	.83		
WRONG4	.64		
HARMFUL1	.53	-.48	
HARMFUL2	.82		
HARMFUL3	.77		
HARMFUL4	.77		
EFFICACY1		.83	
EFFICACY2		.70	
EFFICACY3		.76	
EFFICACY4	-.49	.59	
INEVITABLE1			.56
INEVITABLE2			.77
INEVITABLE3			.78
INEVITABLE4			.76

Factor loadings less than .40 have been omitted. EFFICACY items scored to reflect individuals' beliefs that they can understand and effectively use political methods of influence. Other items scored to reflect beliefs that organziational politics is wrong, harmful to organizations, and inevitable.

measurement system employed in this study. Items pertaining to subjects' beliefs about the preventability of political activity and about their ability to effectively understand and use political influence loaded cleanly on their a-priori designated factors in measures pertaining to both forms of organizational politics. And, while they combined into one factor for both measures, items pertaining to views as to the inherent wrongness and harmful impact of organizational politics are conceptually similar and were hypothesized to have similar effects in the present study. Hence, based on the results of these factor analyses, items pertaining to these similar types of views regarding political activity were combined into one scale, labled "Receptivity". The two other scales were labled "Inevitability" and "Efficacy". For both measures of views concerning political activity (i.e., work-related objectives and personal benefits), subjects who scored high on these subscales were more receptive to the use of politics, saw political behavior as inevitable and common in most organizations, and considered themselves to be politically astute and capable.

The fourth and fifth factor analyses focused on items pertaining to subjects' reported use of political methods of influence to accomplish their work-related objectives and to obtain personal benefits, respectively. These measures both contained 10 items regarding the extent to which subjects' used several political tactics when attempting to influence

their supervisors in order to either accomplish work-related objectives or obtain personal benefits. Though each measure focused on a number of different tactics (i.e., coalition formation, ingratiation, upward appeals, offering exchanges, and assertiveness), all of these tactics can be considered political in nature. Hence, only one factor was extracted from responses to these items in both measures. The factor loadings for items comprising both of these measures are presented in Table A.4.

Results of the factor analyses pertaining to subjects' use of politics for work-related purposes revealed that a unifactorial solution accounted for 39% of the variance in the data. All but two items had factor loadings with values exceeding .50. These two items, with loadings of .49 and .46, both pertained to subjects' use of assertiveness to accomplish their goals.

A similar pattern of results was obtained from a factor analysis of items pertaining to subjects' use of political methods to obtain personal benefits from their supervisors. A unifactorial solution accounted for 44% of the variance in the data, and all but two items had factor loadings greater than .50. Again, the two items pertaining to subjects' use of assertive tactics had loadings of only .48 and .47 on the single factor that was extracted. Hence, for both of these measures, the items regarding assertiveness were omitted from further analyses.

TABLE A.4

FACTOR LOADINGS FOR ITEMS ASSESSING INDIVIDUALS' USE OF POLITICAL METHODS TO ACCOMPLISH WORK-RELATED OBJECTIVES AND TO OBTAIN PERSONAL BENEFITS

Work-Related Objectives

Item	Loading
ING2	.76
EXC2	.73
EXC1	.68
COA2	.68
COA1	.64
ING1	.62
UPW1	.59
UPW2	.57
ASS2	.49
ASS1	.46

Personal Benefits

Item	Loading
ING1	.79
EXC1	.76
COA1	.76
COA2	.75
EXC2	.71
ING2	.66
UPW2	.61
UPW1	.56
ASS1	.48
ASS2	.47

Analyses were specified such that only one factor was extracted for each set of items (work-related and personal). ING=ingratiation. EXC=exchange. COA=coalitions. UPW=upward appeal. ASS=assertiveness.

(Again, it should be noted that the unifactorial solutions for both of these measures were of interest because all of the items contained therein reflect methods of influence which are political in nature. However, it should also be noted that, when a unifactorial solution was not specified, the items in each measure grouped into three separate factors.)

Although several items were deleted as a result of these findings, the factor analytic results are generally supportive of the predetermined measurement system to be employed in the present study. Further evidence of the psychometric quality of these measures was obtained via examining item-total correlations and internal consistency reliability estimates (ALPHAS) for each measure. Alpha values for the 15 measures that were examined all exceeded .60, ranging from .69 to .92, indicating that these measures were of acceptable quality for research purposes. Inspection of the item-total correlations for each scale indicated that removing additional items would result in only negligible improvements in internal consistency estimates ($1/100^{th}$ of a point at best). Thus, no scale modifications were made as a result of these analyses.

The alphas for each measure to be used in this study, scale means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations are reported in Table A.5. For most of the variables that were considered, the means ranged from 2.5 to 3.5 (on a 5-point

TABLE A.5

MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, ALPHAS, AND INTERCORRELATIONS

OF VARIABLES CONSIDERED IN THE PILOT STUDY

#	Variable Name	Mean	(SD)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.	Resource Scarcity	2.72	(1.05)	(.69)									
2.	Lack of Common Goal	2.82	(1.12)	.16	(.82)								
3.	Limited Authority	3.16	(1.08)	**.41**	**.37**	(.77)							
4.	WR Politics Percep.	3.04	(0.86)	.14	**.23**	**.36**	(.91)						
5.	WR Receptivity	3.06	(0.87)	.09	.06	.08	**.43**	(.90)					
6.	WR Inevitability	3.56	(0.74)	**.19**	.08	.14	**.36**	**.35**	(.69)				
7.	WR Efficacy	2.70	(1.01)	.10	.16	.15	**.46**	**.44**	**.44**	(.79)			
8.	WR Politics Usage	1.94	(0.62)	.09	**.19**	.13	**.54**	**.32**	**.29**	**.51**	(.82)		
9.	PB Politics Percep.	2.53	(0.99)	.13	**.26**	**.26**	**.63**	**.23**	**.25**	**.34**	**.44**	(.92)	
10.	PB Receptivity	3.84	(0.89)	-.07	-.11	.00	**.22**	**.36**	.13	**.28**	**.36**	**.19**	(.90)
11.	PB Inevitability	3.45	(0.80)	**.18**	-.02	.06	**.34**	**.29**	**.69**	**.28**	**.19**	**.30**	**.20**
12.	PB Efficacy	2.37	(0.97)	.06	.03	.09	**.41**	**.32**	**.38**	**.73**	**.55**	**.32**	**.46**
13.	PB Politics Usage	1.70	(0.66)	.05	.14	.08	**.44**	**.27**	.15	**.39**	**.81**	**.42**	**.36**
14.	Procedural Justice	3.87	(0.92)	**-.21**	**-.49**	**-.29**	**-.21**	.07	-.05	-.10	**-.17**	**-.35**	-.02
15.	Job Satisfaction	4.29	(0.80)	-.10	-.15	**-.25**	-.15	.04	.02	-.05	-.14	**-.23**	-.13

(Continued)

		11	12	13	14	15
11.	PB Inevitability	(.74)				
12.	PB Efficacy	**.38**	(.80)			
13.	PB Politics Usage	.16	**.44**	(.85)		
14.	Procedural Justice	-.10	-.08	**-.19**	(.81)	
15.	Job Satisfaction	-.01	-.04	**-.26**	**.43**	(.77)

*Note: WR=Work Related objectives; PB=Personal Benefits; N=152; Numbers in bold print are significant at the $p<.05$ level (two-tailed); Means potentially range from 1 to 5; Internal consistency alphas occupy the diagonal.

scale), and standard deviations were .75 or higher. Although the response distributions for the two variables pertaining to subjects' use of political influence were positively skewed and scores on the job satisfaction measure were negatively skewed, these variables were found to correlate significantly ($p<.05$) with other variables that were considered, which suggests that skew does not present a major concern.

In general, the correlational results offer preliminary support for several of the hypotheses to be examined in the main study. Lack of a common goal and limited authority were both significantly related to subjects' perceptions of both types of political activity within their organizations. In addition, such perceptions and subjects' political efficacy and political receptivity were significantly related to their reported use of both types of political influence. The results also support hypotheses regarding relationships between perceptions of organizational politics and both procedural justice and job satisfaction. Moreover, these relationships were stronger with regard to perceptions of political activity intended to obtain personal benefits than for perceptions of political activity surrounding the accomplishment of work-related objectives.

The pattern of correlational results also suggests that several of the variables under examination were essentially

unrelated. While such results may be disappointing in some respects (i.e., not supporting hypothesized relationships), they are noteworthy in that they provide some evidence that common method variance is lacking and, hence, may not pose a serious limitation to the present study.

In sum, the results obtained from this pilot study suggest that several of the measures to be used might be improved by deleting certain items and perhaps generating several new items. However, in light of the generally supportive factor-analytic results and the fairly high alphas that were obtained for each scale, it is unclear to what extent such modifications would significantly improve the overall measurement system.

Statistical Power Analysis

Determination of the number of subjects required to afford a reasonable probability of detecting significance for the relationships hypothesized in the present study was based on a statistical power analysis using the formulas, tables, and conventional standards set forth by Cohen and Cohen (1983) and Cohen (1988). This analysis was based on a multiple regression model of hypothesis testing in which the effects of multiple independent variables on one dependent variable are assessed, because, if multiple regression were used to examine the relationships depicted in Figure 2.5, a series of several regression analyses would be conducted, each focusing on different parts of the model. Hence, for

the present study, enough subjects are needed to enable detection of a significant effect for one independent variable on a given dependent variable when the effects of one or more additional independent variables are considered simultaneously.

According to the equations offered by Cohen and Cohen (1983, p. 117), a sample size of N=348 would be required to have an 80% probability of detecting a significant (α=.05) "small" effect (sr^2=.02) for a single independent variable on a dependent variable when considered together with four additional independent variables which have a combined "medium" size effect (multiple R^2=.13) in relation to the dependent variable of interest ("small" and "medium" effect sizes, alpha=.05, and power=.80 were determined from the conventional standards set forth by Cohen, 1988). Based on these estimates, a sample consisting of the anticipated 360 subjects would afford more than adequate statistical power for the present study.

VITA

William Arnold Schoel, III was born in Birmingham, Alabama on December 8, 1967. There for 18 years, he lived with his parents, William A. Schoel, Jr. and Beverly Ferris Schoel, and sisters, Charlotte Rebecca Schoel (Minor) and Gretchen Ferris Schoel. Upon graduating from Mountain Brook High School in 1986, Will moved to New Orleans, Louisiana where he attended Tulane University and served as student body president from 1988 to 1989. During this time, he also was able to complete courses at Cambridge University in England and travel extensively throughout Great Britain and Europe. He graduated from Tulane in 1990, receiving a Bachelor of Arts Degree, with honors, in Psychology. In that same year, Will moved to Knoxville, Tennessee to attend the University of Tennessee. There, he pursued an interest in Industrial and Organizational Psychology, receiving a Master of Science degree in 1993 and earning a Doctor of Philosophy degree in 1995. Presently a Research Associate at the University of Tennessee, Will continues to pursue his interest in "extra-role" employee behavior as an important counterpart to the formal structures, systems, policies, and roles established by organizations to enhance their performance.